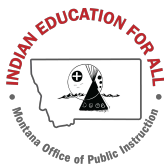


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|-----------|--------|------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Pa        |        | Chicago    | Adelma & Norman | 45          | 25              | 70          |               |                 | O.N. Darling |
| Pa        | 3.00   |            | K Kelly         | Emm         | 30              | 25          | 55            |                 | Chorning     |
| Pa        | 11.00  |            | K Kelly         |             | 75              | 25          | 1.00          |                 | Chorning     |
| Pa        | 5.00   |            |                 |             | 75              | 25          | 1.00          |                 | Chorning     |
| S.H.      |        |            | Rep. Elmer      | Pa. City    | 75              | -           |               |                 | Chorning     |
| Pa        |        |            | K. Emma         | Norma       | 2.15            | 35          | 2.50          |                 | Chorning     |
| Pa & Cash |        |            | Pauline & Creek | Pa.         | 15              | 25          |               |                 | Chorning     |
| By Line   |        |            | Paula           | Emm         | 55              | 35          | 90            |                 | Chorning     |
| Pa        |        |            | M. Mills        | Sunder      | 30              | 25          | 55            |                 | Chorning     |
| 1 Box     |        |            | E.B. Gail       |             | 50              | 50          | 50            |                 | Chorning     |
| 12 Eggs   |        |            | Emm             |             |                 |             | 50            |                 | Chorning     |
|           |        |            | Ed. P. Lang     |             | 50              |             |               |                 | Chorning     |

By  
Zitkala-Ša Gertrude (Simmons) Bonnin

Model Teaching Unit  
Language Arts – Secondary Level



# Model Teaching Unit – Language Arts – Secondary Level

for

*American Indian Stories*

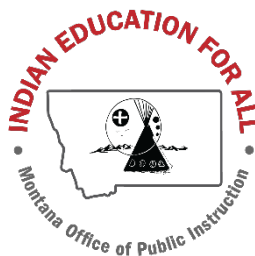
By

Zitkala-Ša Gertrude (Simmons)  
Bonnin

Unit written by Dorothea M. Susag

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# Model Teaching Unit – Language Arts

## Secondary Level

### for

## American Indian Stories

### by Zitkala-Ša Gertrude (Simmons) Bonnin

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Unit written by Dorothea M. Susag

With permission, portions of this unit are taken from *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Themes, Lesson, and Bibliographies*, by Dorothea M. Suag, copyright 1998 by the National Council of Teachers of English.

#### Anchor Text

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*American Indian Stories* by Zitkala-Ša (Yankton/Dakota) with introduction by Susan Rose Dominguez.

Please note, this lesson is based on the University of Nebraska Press Bison Books' edition. The Penguin Books edition, which is what the Office of Public Instruction has for borrowing, has additional materials, so the model lesson materials do not start at the beginning of the book. Also there is a different introduction.

#### Fast Facts

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|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Genre                 | Autobiographical Essay and Short Story              |
| Suggested Grade level | Ninth Grade   |
| Tribe(s)              | Yankton/Dakota Sioux                                |
| Place                 | Yankton Reservation, South Dakota, Boarding Schools |
| Time                  | 1880s to 1900                                       |

#### About the Author and Illustrator

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Scholars believe Zitkala-Ša [Zit-ka-la-Shaw] (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) was one of the first Native writers to publish without the gloss of non-Native editors. She was born on the Yankton Reservation February 22, 1876, to John Haysting and a Yankton Nakoda mother, Ellen Tate I Yohin Win (Reaches for the Wind) Simmons, from whom she learned the ways of her people. Gertrude Simmons (Zitkala-Ša) was a Yankton Sioux woman who spoke the Nakota dialect but had a Lakota name (Picotte xi). Gertrude's mother opposed her leaving home to attend White's Indian Labor Institute, a Quaker missionary school in Wabash, Indiana, but she went anyway. After three years, she enrolled in the

Santee Normal Training School at the Santee Agency in Nebraska, and in 1891 she returned to White's to complete her studies there. Believing her daughter had abandoned their traditional ways, Ellen Simmons and many in the Yankton community rejected the child when she returned. According to Dexter Fisher, the author of the introduction to an earlier edition, Zitkala-Ša never reconciled with her mother and she suffered alienation from her family for the rest of her life.

Gertrude Simmons went on to graduate from Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana in 1897 and studied at the Boston Conservatory of Music from 1899-1900. She became an accomplished violinist and public speaker. *American Indian Stories* includes the three autobiographical essays Gertrude Simmons originally published in 1900 under the name Zitkala-Ša, or Red Bird, when she was teaching at Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Once the essays appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Carlisle authorities suggested she take a long break for her "health." She left the school and in 1902 married another Yankton-Dakota, Captain Raymond Bonnin, and they had one child. In 1916, Gertrude Simmons Bonnin became editor of *American Indian Magazine*, published by the Society of American Indians. She and her husband worked on several reservations, advocating for Native American rights during the 1920s and 1930s. She was also affiliated with the American Indian Defense Association and Indian Rights Association of Philadelphia. According to Agnes M. Picotte in her introduction to *Old Indian Legends*, Zitkala-Ša's collection of traditional stories, Zitkala-Ša's published stories "were meant to inform white people about the American Indians and their unique condition, and a few reveal the turmoil, hurt, anger, and frustration felt by a sensitive, talented American Indian woman." (xv) With a determination to persuade New England society of the humanity of Indian people Zitkala-Ša communicates several levels of meaning as she interprets her past, and the past of her people, to establish a personal and tribal identity, and this voice is what is so compelling about her work, and why it is relevant in the classroom.

According to Frederick Hoxie in "Exploring a Cultural Borderland: Native American Journeys of Discovery" in *American Nations: Encounters in Indian Country, 1950-Present*, "Gertrude Simmons Bonnin exemplified the first generation of native people educated at boarding schools . . . who used their facility with English, their 'civilized' appearance, and their understanding of American institutions to enter political life. They participated in tribal and village councils, circulated petitions attacking the policies of the Office of Indian Affairs, and employed the American legal system to pursue community objectives . . . This effort produced the insight that certain 'rights' set Native Americans apart from other residents of the United States. That insight inspired tribal leaders to launch a campaign to defend their rights and to use existing political and legal institutions to reclaim control of community government and communally owned resources." (8)

Despite her success on behalf of all Indian people, she never reconciled the conflicts that began when she left home to attend boarding school. Her writing demonstrates the complexities of being deeply a part of two worlds: the Indian and non-Indian. In it we find a terrible pull from both worlds, but also the legacy of an American Indian woman who was also to affect positive social change, though it came at a high cost to her culturally and emotionally.

On January 26, 1938, in Washington, D.C., Zitkala-Ša died of heart and kidney disease and was buried in Arlington Cemetery.

[The biographical information presented above was gleaned from several main sources: Fredrick Hoxie; Susan Rose Dominguez, the author of the introduction to the 2003 publication of *American Indian Stories*; Agnes Picotte, in her foreword to *Old Indian Legends*; and Dexter Fisher, the author of the introduction to the 1985 publication of *American Indian Stories*.

## Text Summary

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The first essay, “Impressions of an Indian Childhood,” is separated into seven sections, and the organization is more episodic than sequential—the way memories of childhood might be recalled. But every episode evinces jarring shifts in tone from sweet to bitter to tragic. In this essay, Zitkala-Ša presents the late 19th-century life of a young girl at home on the Dakota prairie, with her mother, her extended family, and her tribal community. The writer shares the lessons in beadwork, hospitality, generosity, and the lessons in stories from her childhood; she recognizes the suffering Indian people have endured from contact with the white man, and she affirms the humanity and valuable Old Ways in her Dakota culture.

In the second essay, “School Days of an Indian Girl,” Quaker missionaries take the eight-year-old from her reservation community to a boarding school in the east. Separated from her mother, she suffers under the forces of acculturation and discrimination from the beginning train ride and the first days at school. The strange new rules and violent punishments result in anger and a desire for revenge that builds in the child. The children are shown the Bible and a picture of the devil which is meant to inspire fear. But in a dream, her mother takes her on her lap and the fearsome devil disappears. When a classmate dies, she blames the “woman” for neglecting their needs in these dark and melancholy days. After three years, she returns home to the “Western country” for the summer. There she experiences a disturbing disconnect between home and school, between the way she sees herself and the way her mother sees her. She is greatly troubled by the changes that have taken place on the reservation and with her mother. Opposing her mother again, she enrolls in another school in the east, and subsequently enrolls in college. She enters a speech contest. Despite the overt racism against her, she wins the contest. Throughout the essay, we see how her traditional values of respect for others and respect for elders conflict with her need to assert her rights both at home and in the white man’s society.

In the third essay, “An Indian Teacher” the narrator returns to teach in an Indian boarding school, remaining separated from her family and community. On her first day, her employer reminds her of the oratory contest, but he does not understand how the prejudice and racism has affected her. After some time, her superintendent sends her back to the reservation to recruit pupils for the school where she finds dramatic changes on the reservation and with her own family. Lovingly, her mother welcomes her home and reminds her that *Taka Iyotan Wasaka* is her solace against the injustice perpetrated by white people. Her mother curses the white settler, but her daughter still returns to teach at the Indian school until an illness and utter disillusionment cause her to resign. The essay closes with the image of “city folks” and “countrymen” who assume the schools have done well to educate the “savages.” The essayist concludes with an implied question: “But few there are who have paused to question whether real life or long-lasting death lies beneath this semblance of civilization.”

Throughout these essays and stories, Zitkala-Ša develops characters who play Iktomi (the Dakota trickster/transformer culture hero). It is through these stories that Dakota children learn how to make sense of the world, how to be wary of those who would manipulate or trick them, and to understand the possibility for the same hypocrisy within themselves. Students can look for ways the writer and characters perform trickery themselves and outsmart the trickster who might cause them harm. Although *American Indian Stories* presents a polarized view of the Indian/white conflict, Zitkala-Ša has achieved a great deal of sophistication and power in her writing by relying on her Native culture, and then using the English language to assert the civilized and frequently “superior” humanity of her Indian people to a non-Indian audience. Mentioning neither the reservation nor the specific names of schools,

the writer also communicates much more than autobiography; she communicates the very universal experience of Native American children for over half a century.

## Recommended Supplemental Materials

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- *Another Attempt at Rescue* by M. L. Smoker (Assiniboine)
- *The Atlantic* (formerly *Atlantic Monthly*), current copies for students to see.
- *The Atlantic* (1900), with Zitkala-Ša's essays [online](#) – Issue 507, January; Issue 508, February; Issue 509, March
- [Carlisle Indian Industrial School History](#) by Barbara Landis
- [Carlisle Indian School Photos](#), Dickinson College Archives & Special Collections
- *Dance in a Buffalo Skull* by Zitkala-Ša, illustrated by S. D. Nelson (Lakota)
- [“The Early Reservation Years,”](#) *Montana: Stories of the Land* by Krys Holmes with Susan C. Dailey, Teacher Consultant, and Dave Walter, Historian
- *Elk Thirst* by Heather Cahoon (Pend d'Oreille)
- [Fort Peck Tribes](#), website
- *How Not To Catch Fish and Other Adventures of Iktomi*, by Joseph M. Marshall (Lakota), illustrated by Joseph Chamberlain (Yankton), and music by John Two-Hawks (Lakota)  
The accompanying CD includes several of the stories.
- *Learning to Write “Indian”: The Boarding School Experience and American Indian Literature* by Amelia V. Katanski
- [Montana Mosaic: 20th Century People and Events](#)  
An educational series from the Montana Historical Society. This DVD was provided to public school libraries.
- [“Multicultural Education and Curriculum Transformation”](#) by James A. Banks  
Banks identifies the four approaches to the implementation of multicultural education.
- [Oceti Sakowin: People of the Seven Council Fires and Bridging the Gap: Native American Education](#)  
Provided by OPI to all public school libraries.
- *Old Indian Legends* by Zitkala-Ša  
See review in *Roots and Branches* (page 212).
- “The People of the Great Plains Parts I and II” and “The People of the Northeast,” *The Native Americans* (video).
- *Poems Across the Big Sky: An Anthology of Montana Poets*, Lowell Jaeger, editor
- *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature Themes, Lessons, and Bibliographies* by Dorothea Susag  
To utilize background information this unit requires, teachers will need to obtain this resource.
- [Sioux Treaty of 1868](#), National Archives
- [South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations](#)  
Information regarding the nine tribes and the Yankton Tribe.
- *Taku Wadaka He? (What Do You See?)* by Joanne Zacharias (Shakopee Mdewakaton Sioux) and illustrated by Steven Smith
- [The Tribes of South Dakota](#), South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations
- *The Trickster and the Troll* by Virginia Driving Hawk Sneve (Lakota)  
The introduction explains Iktomi.
- John Two-Hawks [website](#)



- *What I Keep* by Jennifer Greene (Salish)
- “Wounded Knee (episode 5),” [We Shall Remain](#)  
All the DVDs in this series are valuable even though they are not specifically referenced. They may be viewed online.
- [“Zitkala-Ša \(Gertrude Simmons Bonnin\): A Power\(full\) Literary Voice,”](#) by Dorothea Susag  
This essay provides essential background for a comprehensive explanation of the purpose and implementation required in this unit.

## Montana Standards

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### Essential Understandings Regarding Montana Indians

EUs 2, 3 and 6

### Montana Content Standards

#### Reading

1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1., 2.2, 2.6, 4.4, 4.5, 5.3, 5.5

#### Writing

1.1-4; 2.1-5; 3.3; 4.3; 5.1-2; 6.1-4

#### Literature

1.1-6; 2.1; 2.4; 4.2-3; 5.1; 5.3

#### Social Studies

SS.CG.9-12.5; SS.CG.9-12.12; SS.H.9-12.10

## Learning Targets

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- I understand the influence of the literary, cultural, and historical experience and tradition on the rhetoric in Zitkala-Ša’s three autobiographical essays.
- I appreciate the importance of landscape in the lives of all people.
- I understand the impact of Indian boarding schools and Western settlement on Native American people and the ways one individual survived both culturally and personally.
- I apply my knowledge about irony, tone, and the different narrative and editorial voices which may exist in autobiographical essays such as these.
- I make connections from my reading of *American Indian Stories* to my life and the world outside my classroom.
- I identify main ideas, combine background information with the main text, draw inferences from contextual clues and from details and figurative language to better understand the levels of meaning in *American Indian Stories* in a variety of written modes and genres, as well as speaking and listening and making appropriate oral and media presentations.
- I understand how the six traits of writing appear in *American Indian Stories* and related texts and how they contribute to its effectiveness.
- I know my own strengths and weaknesses in reading and writing, and I set goals for improvement.

- I know how historical and cultural influences give meaning to *American Indian Stories* and other related works.
- I appreciate the uniqueness of the Yankton people and their heritage, while I also understand the aspects of our common humanity, both within and between cultures that *American Indian Stories* portray.

## Day by Day Plan - Steps

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This single unit provides **two approaches** for a study of Zitkala-Ša's stories.

**Approach and Reading in Days 4-12** This reading focuses on comprehension, engagement with the story, and students' connections with their own lives.

- Although days 4-12 are allocated for the first reading, it is certainly possible to move through the text faster or more slowly, depending on students' ability levels and available time.
- You may decide to have the first and second readings going on at the same time, possibly with different groups of students, and possibly with each essay.

**Approach and Reading in Days 15-19** This reading requires a more critical approach and subsequent understanding based on historical, cultural, and literary background knowledge. Because the second reading employs a more sophisticated approach to studying literature than the first, you might choose to skip this extension if it proves too challenging for your students' grade level or abilities.

Zitkala-Ša's work is contemporary American Indian literature which deserves to be read in light of the contexts that have informed it as well as the various audiences that read it. For the literary context, students will learn about the tradition of storytelling and Iktomi stories in particular. In the second reading of the texts, students will understand how the author's exposure to Christianity and Puritan values also contributed to her literary and linguistic contexts. The Appendices provide more cultural, historical, and geographical contextual information.

The available resources will help students read and respond to her writing, making it possible for them to appreciate the literary excellence that has contributed to Zitkala-Ša's reputation as a powerful writer worth serious study.

The Portfolio assignments are written to meet the needs of diverse classes and students. Teachers will determine the requirements for each assignment, as well as how much time is needed for reading and writing, whether in or out of class.

## Day One

### Prereading Activity

- A. **Historical and Geographical Context** Students will locate the Yankton Reservation on a map and begin their understanding of the Yankton history and Dakota storytelling tradition. Divide the class into inquiry groups and assign one of the following questions to each group.
1. What are the South Dakota Indian reservations?
  2. Where is the Yankton Reservation? What can you learn about it?
  3. Who are the Sioux?
  4. What do the Sioux call themselves?
  5. What are the different bands within the Sioux Nation?
  6. What are the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 and the Agreement of 1876?



7. Who is the Trickster/Transformer or Iktomi?
8. What were/are the Indian Boarding Schools in North and South Dakota?

The following might help students search for answers.

1. Fort Peck Tribes
2. South Dakota Department of Tribal Relations
  - The Tribes of South Dakota
  - Yankton Sioux Tribe
3. Sioux Treaty of 1868 (National Archives)
4. *Oceti Sakowin: People of the Seven Council Fires and Bridging the Gap: Native American Education.*
5. Chapter 4: Dislocation/Relocation,” (15 minutes) *Montana Mosaic: 20th Century People and Events*  
This is an educational series from the Montana Historical Society.

Students should be aware of the perspective of various sites – tourism, Native interests, government documents, etc. They may find photographs, both historical and contemporary.

- B. **Portfolio 1:** Keep track of brief notes from research, including sources of information. Students can take notes in the portfolio while conducting internet research individually or in small groups. This also helps in teaching the writing process.
- C. Students will **share** the results of their research for the last 15 minutes of the class period. This does not need to be developed knowledge. It is merely an introduction.

**Teacher Tip:** You may use the information in the sources below to prompt students’ thinking. We do not want to drown them in too much information. We just want to build on their previous knowledge and stimulate their curiosity to begin this unit.

- 1) Appendix A: Trickster/ Transformer figure from *Roots and Branches* (41-42)
- 2) Appendix B: Yankton Reservation History as Reported in *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs* (1874-1902).
- 3) *Oceti Sakowin: People of the Seven Council Fires and Bridging the Gap: Native American Education.*
- 4) “Zitkala-Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin): A Power(full) Literary Voice” by Dorothea Susag, *Studies in American Indian Literatures*, 1993 Winter (3-24). This essay provides essential background for a comprehensive explanation of the purpose and implementation required in this unit.

**Teacher Tip:** Portfolio Assignments: You might make some assignments optional, or students may select from available choices. Depending on the students, some Portfolio assignments may be homework while others may be completed in class.

## Days Two and Three

### Prereading Activity

- A. **Literary Context – *Atlantic Monthly Magazine***  
Explain how these stories were first published in this literary magazine with a sub-title of “A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art and Politics.” Although the text as published today looks like a book for children or young adults, the audience in 1900 was educated, non-Indian adults who lived in the eastern United States. This unit will help students understand there is much more to Zitkala-Ša’s writing than meets the eye.

**Teacher Tip:** If possible, invite a local elder or traditional storyteller to your classroom. If it is appropriate, ask that person to tell a story about own tribes’ trickster/transformer figure. A wealth of online video clips is available at [Montana Tribes](#). The [Turtle Island Storytellers Network](#) has Montana tribal storytellers. You may also read from Zitkala-Ša’s collection of Iktomi stories *Old Indian Legends*.

- B. **Listen** to Joseph M. Marshall III (Lakota) tell Iktomi stories on the CD that accompanies the picture book *How Not to Catch Fish and Other Adventures of Iktomi*. John Two Hawks, the musician on the CD comments, “Although these tales do come from Indian culture, they are not ‘Indian Stories.’ These are tales that impart the value of honesty, humility, integrity, love, selflessness, perseverance, faith, respect, compassion and so many other qualities we all need, young and old, to live a good life.” As a class, check out his website.

Please consider the following:

- Most of the lessons in these stories are implicit rather than explicit. It might help to put the above list of values in bold on the board to stimulate some ideas.
- Flute music provides background for the stories, but the music continues for about 13 more minutes after the last story. One segment is a song about Iktomi flying. You may play the CD while students draw or write.
- Play the stories one at a time and invite students to draw images while they listen. Tell them to think about these things as they listen:
  - What lessons did the story teach?
  - Where did you find yourself in the story?
  - What were some appropriate or inappropriate behaviors exhibited in the story?
- At the end of each story, have students share their thoughts.

Stories on the Marshall CD:

- (3-10) 13 minutes -- “Iktomi and the Fish” Iktomi tries to catch a very old catfish and learns the lesson that things are not always as they seem.
  - (17-24) 13 minutes -- “Iktomi and the Trees” Wind, in one of her moods, playfully causes trouble for Iktomi as he tries to pick buffalo berries and then gets caught between two trees.
  - (25-34) 16 minutes -- “Iktomi Flies” Unprepared for winter, Iktomi tries to fly south with goose who tells him he can fly if he just believes. Seeing him flying with the geese, a two-legged laughs and it makes him angry. Unable to ignore their ridicule, he falls from the sky into the camp. “Too Much Anger and Not Enough Believing” A woman takes care of him all winter and when spring comes, he leaves and forgets to thank her.
  - (34-41) 18 minutes -- “Iktomi and the Meaning of Truth” Iktomi tricks Old Bear and gets plums as his prize. But then a wolverine comes to the prairie and Old Bear does not have the confidence to fight him off. Knowing he cannot be as strong as Old Bear, the other animals convince Iktomi he must do the right thing, tell the truth about how he had tricked Old Bear.
- C. **Introduce** Zitkala-Ša’s *American Indian Stories* with a brief biography of Gertrude Bonnin from the introductions by Susan Rose Dominguez in *American Indian Stories* and Agnes Picotte in *Old Indian Legends*.

## Day Four

### Approach and Reading 1

- A. **Begin by reading aloud** to the students “My Mother,” the first section from “impressions of an Indian Childhood.”
- B. **Portfolio 2: Write** for half a page in response to the prompt D.I.C.E, what Disturbed, Interested, Confused, or Enlightened you as you listened to this short section.
- C. After they write, ask students to share their responses in a circle discussion.

D. **Assign** students to **read** the rest of “Impressions of an Indian Childhood.”

## Day Five

- A. **Getting at the Meaning Questions** for small group discussion or reading check:
1. What appropriate behaviors does the child understand and practice in “The Legends”?
  2. What question is left unanswered? What is the effect of that on you as a reader?
  3. Explain the ritual of storytelling the children play.
  4. How does the mother help her daughter overcome her fear of an old warrior?
  5. How does the grandfather protect the child’s feelings?
  6. Describe the gathering of warriors and women.
  7. Why does mother forbid her daughter to touch the plum bush?
  8. What does the girl remember about corn and the squirrel?
  9. Why does the mother tell her daughter to leave the squirrel alone?
  10. Why does her mother oppose, and her aunt support, her leaving for school?
  11. Why does the child want to go?

- B. **Portfolio 3: Make two columns on a sheet of paper.** Write “confused” at the top of one and “surprised” at the top of the other. In ten minutes list what you found confusing and what you found surprising under the appropriate column, using phrases or short sentences.
- C. Students will share and discuss their lists in small groups. Following the small group discussion, speakers from each group will share the most common or interesting responses with the whole class.

### Teacher Tip: Portfolio 3 Activity

If student confusion arises from limited background knowledge, you may help students recall what they learned from their preliminary research. You may also provide additional historical and geographical contextual background information found in *Roots and Branches* “The Yankton Reservation: 1858-1902.” It could help answer some of the students’ questions. However, the primary focus of this first read is to engage the students in the story and have them make connections between the characters and themselves.

## Days Six and Seven

- A. Class will brainstorm in a teacher-lead discussion, what has this child learned from her mother? Students may consider practical skills, understanding of the world around her, spiritual matters, behaviors toward others, what to fear and why, what to value. Some lessons are positive and some negative.
- B. **Portfolio 4:** Think about what this child has learned and remember when you were seven and eight. **Write** about the important lessons you learned from your mother or father.
- C. **Portfolio 5:** You will make two drawings.
1. This story takes place in a neighborhood. Imagine what it looks like and **illustrate** the story with a map of places mentioned.
  2. **Draw** a map of your neighborhood or town. What are the places and people (their homes) you will choose to include? **Write** a short paragraph about the similarities or differences between what you chose to include and what the essayist included.
- D. **Portfolio 6:** List the elements you might include in your own memoir entitled “**Impressions of . . . Childhood**” that might be published in the Montana Historical Society’s *Montana The Magazine of Western History*. Zitkala-Ša has seven sections. How many will you have? Will you describe your

home, parents, friends, chores, what makes you happy, sad, or fearful? What stories will you include?

## Day Eight

- A. Begin by **reading** aloud to the students “The Land of the Big Red Apples,” the first section from “The School Days of an Indian Girl.”
- B. **Portfolio 7: Write** for half a page in response to the prompt D.I.C.E, what Disturbed, Interested, Confused, or Enlightened you as you listened to this short section.
- C. After they write, ask students to share their responses in a circle discussion.
- D. As a class, **watch** “Chapter 4,” *Montana Mosaic: 20th Century People and Events* about Indian boarding schools or “Wounded Knee,” *We Shall Remain*.
- E. **View** images of the Carlisle Indian School held by the Archives and Special Collections of Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- F. Assign students to **read** the remainder of “The School Days of an Indian Girl.”

## Day Nine

- A. Invite students to **talk** about a time when they had to leave home for an extended period.
  - 1. What did you miss?
  - 2. How did you deal with the distance or loneliness?
  - 3. How did you communicate with those you left behind?
  - 4. What made the adjustment to the new place easy or difficult?
  - 5. How did you make new friends?
  - 6. How did you deal with new rules in the school or home?
- B. **Getting at the Meaning Questions** for small group discussion or reading check:
  - 1. What are the strange new rules and sounds at this school? How does the child respond?
  - 2. In the “Snow Episode,” what happens to a child who has been caught playing in the snow? Why?
  - 3. What did the child do with the turnips? Why?
  - 4. How does the child respond to this strange new teaching about “The Devil”? How does a dream change her?
  - 5. What is the “Iron Routine”?
  - 6. How did she lose a classmate? Who does she blame?
  - 7. How have the child and her home changed since she has been gone?
  - 8. Why does her mother grieve?
  - 9. How does she feel about school, her home, and herself?
  - 10. In Section VII, how does she conflict with her mother’s will?
  - 11. What happens at the speech contest?
  - 12. How does she feel and how did she respond?
- C. **Portfolio 8: Write** about what disturbed you the most in this essay. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the rest of the class.

## Day Ten

- A. As a class, **define** “justice” and “injustice.” Where is the evidence of either one in this essay? Does it help to blame? What is the most profitable response?
- B. **Portfolio 9: Write** a narrative essay or tell a story of a time when you were not treated fairly or when you witnessed another person experiencing injustice. How did you respond to the situation? What do you wish you had done or not done? How did the perpetrator of the injustice respond to your actions? In light of Zitkala-Ša’s essay and her response to injustice, what have you learned about yourself and the situation in your own story?
- C. Assign students to **read** “An Indian Teacher Among Indians.”

## Day Eleven

- A. **Getting at the Meaning Questions** for small group discussion or reading check:
  - 1. Why does she decide to teach?
  - 2. What disturbs her on her first day?
  - 3. In “A Trip Westward,” what does the superintendent decide to do with her?
  - 4. What has changed on the reservation and what has stayed the same?
  - 5. What does she learn about her cousin Dawée?
  - 6. How has her relationship with her mother changed? Why?
  - 7. What ultimate power do they both trust?
  - 8. Why does her mother curse the white settlers?
  - 9. Although the daughter returns to teaching, she decides to resign. Why?
  - 10. She compares herself to a “cold bare pole, planted in a strange earth.” What does this image imply about how she feels?
  - 11. What has she given up for the white man’s education? What had she gotten in exchange?
  - 12. What assumptions do “city folk” and “countrymen” who visit the school make? What does the essayist think about their visits?
- B. **Portfolio 9: Write** for half a page in response to the prompt D.I.C.E, what Disturbed, Interested, Confused, or Enlightened you as you read this final essay.
- C. After they write, ask students to **share** their responses in a circle discussion.
- D. **Portfolio 10: Read** “On Going Home” by Heather Cahoon in *Elk Thirst*. In this contemporary poem, the speaker travels home. She remembers the exact route and all the details that mean “home” to her. In the third of Zitkala-Ša’s essays, the teacher is sent home for a while. She, too, imagines what she will see -- old friends and the vast prairie. Imagine you have been away from home for an extended period and now get to go home. **Write** a free verse poem about how you might get there. Follow the pattern of Cahoon’s poem and recreate the route and all the details that mean “home” to you. What do you imagine you will see? What do you remember that keeps you going?
- E. Possible questions for class discussion:
  - 1. The narrator talks about “a new way of solving the problem of my inner self.” What might she mean? What kind of problems might we have with our “inner selves”?
  - 2. Explain the last paragraph as you understand it. Does the narrator give an answer to the problem? Do you know where she stands?

## Day Twelve

- A. **Read** the picture book by Zitkala-Ša, *Dance in a Buffalo Skull*. Zitkala-Ša heard this story from her Dakota elders, and she translated it into English in 1901 for her collection *Old Indian Legends*. Mice dance and play inside a buffalo skull when a wildcat approaches. No one is keeping watch, so they are unaware of the dangers outside. The introduction suggests a lesson in the story: “We all need to pay attention to the world around us and not get too caught up in what we are doing.” (iii) Talk with students about how this story might be a metaphor for what happened to Indian people as shown in Zitkala-Ša’s essays.
- B. **Read** the picture book by *Taku Wadaka He? (What Do You See?)* by Joanne Zacharias. The author is a certified Dakota language teacher, and she wrote this book to help children and adults learn the Dakota language. The illustrations will inspire even more conversation. Over and over, a grandparent asks the child what she sees; an eagle, a bear, a deer, a stone/rock, lightning and thunderclouds, the sun and a rainbow, a buffalo, a fancy shawl, a drum, a Grandfather, a house/home. And the child asks the Grandfather what he sees: “My granddaughter, I see you and me, and we are all related.”
- C. **Portfolio 11:** With many episodes in these essays, the character experiences a major contrast between what she expects and what happens. **Write** about a time where your experience in a situation did not match your expectations. How did you feel? What did you do? Did you resolve the conflict? How or why?
- D. **Portfolio 12:** Sometimes, what people say might contradict what they do. **Identify** one example and **explain** the possible motivation behind the hypocrisy. How is this like Iktomi?

## Day Thirteen

- A. **Read** poems by Montana poets.
1. “Missions” by Heather Cahoon in *Elk Thirst*. Montana Indians suffered through the effects of boarding schools. In this poem, the speaker comes to Agnes to ask her about boarding schools, but Agnes wants to talk about the speaker. So, after many hours of conversation, Agnes tells the speaker about the “father’s teachings,” the “cut-off” hair, and the fear. How can they survive? What images in this poem are echoed in Zitkala-Ša’s essays?
  2. “For Those Who Hate” by Jennifer K. Greene in *What I Keep*. This is a poem about racism and the way hatred protects people from feelings of guilt and sadness, and the way hatred prevents people from growing up to be “humane.” What characters in Zitkala-Ša’s essays might be an appropriate audience for this poem? What is the lesson for us all?
  3. “A Force They Could Not Control” by Lois Red Elk (Assiniboine/Sioux) in *Poems Across the Big Sky: An Anthology of Montana Poets*. Lois Red Elk writes in her short biography that “in order to convey the whole of our lives, I also write about the harsh and disturbing.” The speaker in “A Force ...” views the remains of a boarding school, “set up by the war department.” The descendants look through photographs to see how the children of boarding schools grew up to act out their anger. The children were told to keep secrets and not to tell, and they did not.

### Teacher Tip: Poetry is the Cream on Top!

Although you might find it valuable to analyze these poems, students will appreciate the opportunity to just listen and reflect and then freely talk about the questions with each one. You might have them write themselves, but first let them experience the language and imagery in each.



What were the consequences? Was there a perpetuation of the same abuse that made them victims themselves? Anger underscores much in Zitkala-Ša's essays. How is hers the same or different from the kind portrayed in this poem? Think about ways people direct their anger for good or for evil?

4. "Birthright" by M. L. Smoker in *Another Attempt at Rescue*. The speaker is a descendant of the Indian people on the Fort Peck Reservation who suffered similar losses and conflicts as those on the Yankton Reservation and in Zitkala-Ša's essays. The speaker writes to a friend, "an heir to your family's homestead." She recognizes that now in this contemporary time, they both will call this place "home." This is a peace poem; there is no anger but instead the recognition of a need common to all. Think about ways we learn to let go of anger and make peace. The end of Zitkala-Ša's essays shows she would fight for freedom and rights another way. She did it through words and the legal system.
5. "Casualties" by M. L. Smoker in *Another Attempt at Rescue*. The poem begins with a quote from Michael Krauss, ". . . linguistic diversity also forms a system necessary to our survival as human beings." The poem is about the loss and survival of language, and culture perhaps, and the individual's responsibility to keep it. Yet four generations after the first boarding schools deprived children of their native language, the languages are still alive. What is of value to your culture or your heritage you have failed to keep alive? How can you "begin" to recover what might be lost if you do not carry it on.

## Day Fourteen

- A. Students may **read** Chapter 3 of *Learning to Write "Indian": The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature* by Amelia Katanski.
- B. Have students **search** the Carlisle Indian Industrial School History site to see how the information either contradicts or supports what Zitkala-Ša has written.
  1. Discuss the responses of the 1900 audience and Zitkala-Ša's written responses.
  2. Were the criticisms justified? Were her responses justified?
  3. Where do we see current statements about injustice published?
  4. Are the writers themselves criticized for having spoken out?

## Days Fifteen and Sixteen

The voices and images in Zitkala-Ša's essays emerge from five different contexts that influenced this writer:

- the intimate family life of her childhood;
- the late 19th-century Yankton Reservation experience;
- Lakota/Dakota history and traditional culture;
- classical and Judeo-Christian literature; and
- the language of eastern America's literary society.

## Approach and Reading 2

- A. **Read** and **Discuss** resources for a deeper look – preparation for the Literary Scavenger Hunt.
  1. "The Early Reservation Years," *Montana: Stories of the Land*
  2. "Appendix B: Historical Context," *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature Themes, Lesson, and Bibliographies*Pay particular attention to the 1887 Dawes Act or General Allotment Act, the Consequences of Allotment Policy for tribes, and the August 15, 1894, Parent Consent for Education Act.

3. "Historical and Cultural Literary Contexts – Classification of Genres," *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature Themes, Lesson, and Bibliographies*  
Pay particular attention to the trickster/transformer figure.
  4. Appendix B: Yankton Reservation History as Reported in *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs (1874-1902)* (A Portion of the Historical and Geographical Context)
  5. "Secondary Level Units, Lessons, and Activities -- Background," *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature Themes, Lesson, and Bibliographies*
    - The Lakota System of Bands and Alliances (historical, geographical, linguistic, and cultural contexts)
    - Classification of Lakota Cosmology (linguistic and cultural)  
This will not require discussion at this point, but students should have access to this vocabulary list.
- B. You may have students **watch** the boarding school sections from "Episode 5 Wounded Knee" *We Shall Remain* or "The People of the Great Plains Parts I and II" and "The People of the Northeast," *The Native Americans* (the sections that apply to the time and places in these essays, particularly the segment on Indian boarding schools).
- C. **Portfolio 13:** Ask students to **make note** of information they did not know before reading the resources or viewing the DVDs.
- This may be a review as they have participated in preliminary research and the teacher has provided some information from these sources.
- D. **Assign** students to **read** "Impressions of an Indian Childhood."

## Day Seventeen - Introduction to Literacy Scavenger Hunt Activity for Approach and Reading 2

### Cooperative Learning or "Workshopping"

For the Approach and Reading 2, students will work in discussion or "workshop" groups of three-five under the following rules:

- **Follow teacher's directions for grouping.** You might have them count off numbers, draw for groups, draw cards, or whatever works to create a random mix. When students are randomly grouped, they learn to cooperate and work with individuals they might not have known or liked before. In addition, more learning occurs because they are not preoccupied with sharing details from their own lives. "Pick a partner" can quickly deteriorate into cliques and off-topic conversation.
- **Select a scribe and a speaker.** At the end of the reading and note taking time, the speaker in each group will share the discussion findings with the rest of the class.
- **Respect your own right to learn.** Students must give their full attention to the task at hand and compare prepared to class.
- **Respect the rights of others to learn.** No one has the right to dominate discussion, to avoid making contributions, to interact with any other group during the workshopping session.

## Workshop Activity 1 for “Impressions of an Indian Childhood”

- A. Look at the significant figures and names from the Lakota Cosmology found on pages 93-94 of *Roots and Branches*. What evidence of any of these symbols might you see in the text? Pay attention to the names of Gertrude Simmon’s mother as given in Susan Rose Dominguez’ introduction to *American Indian Stories*. It is also important to recognize that at the time of her writing this essay, the writer had been estranged from her mother for several years.

### Examples

- *Tate* is the feminine Wind. Words indicating “wind” appear in the essays, primarily in the western landscape: “cool morning breezes,” “hair blowing in the breeze,” “free as the wind.”
  - The child sits on the rock. The rock (Inyan) is powerful and sacred (Wakan), and it provides security for her.
- B. Cite examples of the lyrical writing and animal similes and metaphors that would indicate freedom of the traditional landscape of an Indian or a particular tribal writer. This includes metaphors and vocabulary.

### Examples

- Pay attention to and point out to students the parallel consonants, vowels, and phrases and parallel participles: “spirited as a bounding deer,” “driven like a herd of buffalo,” “howling of wolves,” “hooting of an owl,” “captured young of a wild creature.”
- C. Identify evidence of irony.

### Examples

- Mother teaches her child to never infringe on the rights of others – contrast with the uninvited American presence.
  - Iktomi has no concept of sincerity. He manipulates to get what he wants. Compare that with the paleface who is a “heartless sham” and who “defrauds” and lies, and missionaries are associated with deceit.
  - The missionaries carry “large hearts” that the child trusts, but they may be compared more to the serpent in Genesis who would purposefully do absolute harm to those he tempts.
- D. Identify evidence of suffering, loss, and anger.

### Examples

- “Heartless paleface” that has forced people away and stolen land.
- Wiyaka-Napbina has “long lean arms” and is “driven by extreme hunger.”
- “Bad paleface”

**Teacher Tip:** As your students respond to the questions in these workshops, you can help them understand the following:

Zitkala-Ša accommodated an eastern audience even as she “indicted” them for the wrongs they had done to Indian people.

Zitkala-Ša demonstrated the practice of successful persuasion in these essays: If you want to successfully persuade an audience, you draw them in by telling them what they already know and believe.

Zitkala-Ša appropriated the stories and voices of both her Yankton people and Judeo-Christians, and she bent them to shape her own voice. **This is the striking irony:** had she not gone to boarding school and college against her mother’s will, then perhaps her readers might never have heard the power and spirit of that Dakota mother as it whispers and moans through these essays.

- E. Locate images that indicate the child's relationship with her mother.

**Examples**

- She is brave when her mother is near, fearful when alone.
- As the wagon pulls away from her home, she feels suddenly weak.
- She is her mother's "little daughter."
- She nestles in her mother's lap.
- She learns lessons of respect for others from her mother.

- F. Locate images that might suggest a reservation landscape.

**Examples**

- "wigwam" -- However, this is an Algonquin word, not Dakota, that eastern readers would have been familiar with.
- "weather-stained canvas" -- Before reservations, the tipis were covered in buffalo skins. The mother uses "teepee" when talking to her daughter.

- G. Identify examples of rhetoric which would suggest a Judeo-Christian influence.

**Examples**

- Child suffers "many trials."
- She punishes herself when she misbehaves.
- She serves "unleavened bread" to a guest.
- Smoke rises "heavenward."
- She eyes the "forbidden fruit."
- The mother "worships" the uncles' memory.
- the "big red apples" -- Garden of Eden and temptation

- H. Identify places that reveal this is a girl growing up in the Old Ways.

**Examples**

- "brown buckskin"
- "moccasins"
- "sinew"
- "She halts shyly" at entrances to neighbor's teepees.
- Shaming is a discipline.
- All things have voice or spirit and power, whether for good or bad.

- I. Look for some words that would make the writer's eastern audience think she was clearly educated and no longer a "savage." Such words would also have impressed an educated Indian audience, especially since she would have grown up with an appreciation for the correct use of the Dakota language as well.

**Examples**

- "greatly vexed"
- "imprudence"
- "insipid hospitality"

- J. Have a **class discussion** with students sharing what they have learned in their workshopping session.

K. **Assign** students to **read** “School Days of an Indian Girl.”

## Day Eighteen

### Workshop Activity 2 for “School Days of an Indian Girl”

In this essay, tension persists between the natural rhythms and images from the traditional Dakota landscape and culture, and the classical rhetoric and more technological imagery from the American landscape and culture.

A. Name specific European-American acculturation practices in this essay.

#### Examples

- cutting their hair
- changing their dress
- brutal boarding-school regimen
- forbidding children to speak their own language

B. Name specific evidence (comments and actions) of resistance to European-American acculturation.

#### Examples

- She kicks and scratches to avoid having her hair cut.
- She mashes the turnips and breaks the jar.

C. Identify the tone of the essay. Cite three images or sentences from the text which demonstrate tone.

D. Locate evidence of irony in the text.

#### Examples

- The children think they are going to a “Wonderland;” instead, it is like a prison.
- While the children are regarded as evil if they disobey, the “Paleface” demonstrates inhumanity to Indian children.
- When she returns to the reservation after three torturous years at school hoping for a better world at home, she sees how the landscape has also suffered from the influence of “civilization” and even her mother has been influenced by the Bible.
- The daughter rejects the Bible, and she is the one who has been steeped in it at school.
- She is in conflict with those at home and with her American peers.

E. Name at least three aspects of the eastern experience which might contrast with the writer’s childhood experiences on the Dakota prairie.

#### Examples

- In the place of soft moccasins, “hard shoes” knock against the floor.
- Her mother teaches her to respect others, and these people “scrutinize” and “disturb and trouble” her.
- soft sounds of nature and her mother, and clanging bells.

F. Consider how this essay may be read as an *Iktomi* story or a story featuring the trickster/transformer figure.

#### Example

- Think about who is trying to trick or fool another and how that person ends up looking like a fool or evil one instead.

- G. Have a **class discussion** with students sharing what they have learned in their workshopping session.
- H. **Assign** students to **read** “An Indian Teacher.”

## Day Nineteen

### Workshop Activity 3 for “An Indian Teacher”

- A. Look for references to Wind.

#### Examples

- She is struck by a “strong hot wind . . . determined to blow [her] hat off.”

- B. Name at least two instances where the writer and/or child refuse to remain the victim.

#### Examples

- She dreams about helping Indian people.
- With the strength of Missouri River willows, she is able to “bend without breaking” under the pressures of her work.

- C. Identify images and words that describe her employer. What does she understand about what he is really thinking?

#### Example

- She is not fooled by the patronizingly “superior” employer.

- D. Identify images and words that describe white people in this essay.

#### Examples

- The driver is “fumbling” and alcoholic and laughable.
- The white teacher smokes opium.
- The doctor’s Indian patients die.

- E. Name at least three instances where Americans are moving in or taking over or changing the Yankton landscape and the lifeways of the people.

- F. Explain how we might read this essay as an “indictment” against European Americans.

#### Possible answers

- The essays succeed in communicating the humanity of the Indian.
- They portray the Indian as more “civilized” than the white man.
- The writer expresses concern for all Indian children who suffer under the boarding school system.
- They portray the suffering of the Indians as the consequence of the white man’s greed, inhumanity, and, most important, the boarding school system.

- G. Identify the stereotype of Americans this essay portrays.

- H. Explain what the writer may have meant in saying she found a “new way of solving the problem.”

#### Possible answer

- Perhaps she will write and publish the truth.

- I. Have a **class discussion** with students sharing what they have learned in their workshopping session. Teachers may direct the following question to the class as a whole:



1. What aspects of this child's life are missing from this story?
  - Sometimes what is missing tells us more about a writer, a story, or a situation than what is included. The absence of names of people and places makes this story universal. It does, in fact, represent the universal experience of all Indian people across the continent.
  - **Possible answers**
    - facial features of the mother and her child
    - a father
    - extended family except for a few
    - paleface names
    - names of boarding schools and teachers
    - names of her village or reservation
    - ceremony and overt references to the names and actions of sacred power

## Assessment

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1. Assessment or Extension Activities can complete this unit. Review the Learner Targets to see what students have learned.
2. Student groups will be evaluated on group participation.
3. Essay response to workshopping experience:
  - a. Paragraph 1 -- Introduction and thesis: Explain the way you personally approached learning or interacting with the essays in *American Indian Stories* and the way your group worked together.
  - b. Paragraph 2 -- Explain the way your group worked. How did you approach each day's task? Who contributed the most, who the least? How was the approach beneficial or not? How did you conclude each question?
  - c. Paragraph 3 -- Select one question or issue which your group discussed and write about the arguments, discussion, and conclusions. You may write more than one paragraph here.
  - d. Paragraph 4 -- Discuss your reaction to a particular character in *American Indian Stories*.
    - Did you like the character or not? Why or why not?
    - Did you have sympathy for that person? Why or why not?
    - When did you BEGIN to feel sympathy for the character?
  - e. Paragraph 5 -- Conclusion: Some say one of the powers of literature and our ACTIVE involvement with it is it can teach us about ourselves. Conclude by writing about insights you have gained in your own understanding. For you, what was the most difficult aspect of this unit and/or the Literary Scavenger Hunt?
4. Each student will keep a portfolio of all work noted throughout the unit.
  - a. The portfolio will be assessed on completeness (all assignments given) and presentation (how does this best represent *me* and my work during this unit).
  - b. It will include a table of contents or a list of all assignments made and completed, in order.
  - c. It will conclude with a self-evaluation of the student's participation in the unit that will include the following:
    - student's self-assessment of own writing;
    - student's personal response to reading such a work;
    - short essay about where the student found self in the novel;
    - students might ask themselves, how am I changed?

- Teachers might give students the list of “Learner Targets” at the beginning of the unit to prompt their thinking. Assessment 3 may be used in this place.
  - d. Some individual assignments will have been evaluated for grades separate from the portfolio.
  - e. The portfolio folder will always stay in the classroom for the teacher to check occasionally. To make the accounting easier, you may use numbers for each assignment.
5. Quizzes and daily reading checks and final test made from some of the questions for each chapter.
  6. Culminating questions for reflection, discussion, or final exam:
    - a. How would the story change if the protagonist were male instead of female?
    - b. What have you learned about the Yankton culture and landscape from reading this story? Remember culture includes *education, government, marriage practices, parenting practices, food, lodging, vocations, values, religion*. What more would you like to know and how would you find the information?
    - c. How is the child/student/teacher strong or weak? You will need to define *strong* in your own terms and then provide evidence to support your claim.
    - d. How has memory helped Zitkala-Ša to survive?
    - e. Name three lessons Zitkala-Ša learned through the boarding-school experience. Which lesson was the most important? Explain your answer.
    - f. Why would Zitkala-Ša decide to go back to the school even though much of the experience was negative and it meant alienation from her mother?
    - g. What are the ways people demonstrate respect in these essays? Explain how each situation defines respect.
    - h. How do *American Indian Stories* by Zitkala-Ša help you understand the diversity of tribes and individuals, as well as the impact of federal Indian policy on Indian people and communities.
    - i. What are Zitkala-Ša’s communicative goals? Who were her audiences?
    - j. Think about what we know or teach about the slave trade, system of slavery in the United States, system of prejudice and discrimination before the civil rights movement in the south that helps us understand books like *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred Walker. This is a common text for middle-school students. Since our students have learned much about the slave trade and slavery in America, they better understand novels that require previous knowledge and understanding. Too many of our children have little understanding of accurate American Indian history and authentic cultural experience that informs contemporary literatures written by American Indians. How does a study of *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* compare or contrast with the particular history of American Indian peoples and how that history informs *their* literature?

## Teacher Notes and Cautions

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*American Indian Stories* is written by a woman who suffered under the influence of Christian missionaries and Indian boarding schools. Her anger at them and with the system and ideology that permitted them to entice and capture children and take them away from their homes and families for years at a time is very clear in this writing. Since many of the children in our schools, whether on or off the reservation, have very strong Christian beliefs, they might have difficulty with the challenges posed by this writer. It is important to help them understand the perceptions of the children and families affected by this influence, no matter how noble the intention of the missionaries. They also are old enough to understand that sometimes individuals within systems do not always represent the ideals of

the system. It is also important they understand the major goals of the boarding school system -- to break up tribes, to separate children from their families and their culture, and to “kill the Indian” inside. The churches were the tools by which the federal government worked toward this goal.

Several **Portfolio Assignments** might generate some very personal responses. Offer students the opportunity to write without anyone reading what they have written. Otherwise, they might substitute names to protect the identity of individuals mentioned. It is possible for you to require writing you will never read, but you must be able to trust the honor of the individual in saying the writing is complete.

## Vocabulary

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Assimilation    Acculturation

Teachers will ask students to identify words in each reading that require definition. This will certainly depend on the individuals. Also, the readings in the Appendices include words that will require definition. If the students come up with those words themselves, they are more apt to remember the definitions. Sometimes a word can be defined using context clues and will not require a formal definition.

## Extension Activities

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### Independent Reading Options

1. *Children Left Behind: The Dark Legacy of Indian Mission Boarding Schools* by Tim Giago (Oglala Lakota), illustrated by Denise Giago
  - This “is a sad story of a nation’s best intentions gone awry. Tim Giago’s personal accounts reveal an untold tragedy of abuse of helpless children by those who had the responsibility to protect them. To fully understand the calamity, you need only visit the graveyards of the old boarding schools and see the hundreds of graves of Indian children who did not survive the misguided assimilation efforts.”  
-- Richard B. Williams (Oglala Lakota), President and CEO, American Indian College Fund
  - This book, “written by respected journalist Tim Giago, is a fascinating mix of personal stories and history and the role of government and mission boarding schools in the lives of native people. The book provides the reader with the cultural and historical context for many of the problems encountered by Native American families in the 21st century.”  
-- Wilma Mankiller, former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation
2. *No Time to Say Goodbye: Children’s Stories of Kuper Island Residential School* by Sylvia Olsen with Rita Morris and Ann Sam (Tsartlip First Nation)

Based on memories shared with the authors, this is a fictional account of five children who were sent to boarding school. The children in this story were taken by government agents from Tsartlip Day School to Kuper Island Residential School. Isolated and separated from family and community, they suffer abuse and discrimination, with the suggestion of sexual abuse of a young girl. However, they also experience adventure and fun in competition, as well as friendship with other students. A very engaging read, *No Time to Say Goodbye* is one of the best fictional accounts of this dramatic and tragic time in the lives of native children in Canada and the United States.

3. *The Flight of Red Bird: The Life of Zitkala-Ša* by Doreen Rappaport  
This biography uses the writings of Zitkala-Ša, including the three essays from *American Indian Stories*, along with further research.

## General Activities

1. **To Learn a New Way** [footlocker](#) from the Montana Historical Society Education Office
2. In groups of three, students can develop a working **Character Map** on butcher paper with three divisions -- the child, the student, the teacher. Add details from each essay to support what the child/student/teacher says, does and thinks; what others say of her; her conflicts and resolutions.
3. Student can create a **Geographical Setting Map** of each essay, with rivers and landscape, climate, economics, population, present locations, the way the land in that area is used today, and where the Yankton Sioux live.
  - a. In addition, they can search the internet for photos and more research.
  - Example  
[Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center, Dickinson College](#)  
This website is the efforts of Barbara Landis and Genevieve Bell. "Their 'express purpose in keeping this history alive is to encourage historians to invigorate a troubling conversation and to deliver the Carlisle Indian School student names to their respect nations.' Content includes student rosters, bibliographies, and other resources for Indian School descendants."
4. As students read on their own, have them keep a chart that includes two lists of situations: one where individuals demonstrate **respect** and one with **disrespect** for others. In each case, what motivates the action or reaction? What are the consequences? How does the child/student/teacher change as a result of the situation?
5. **Draw or paint** pictures of all settings in the story.

## Writing Activities

1. Using scanned pages and a smart board or students' books, use text to teach or reinforce the Six Traits of Writing.
  - Effective use of transitions to establish a logical **organizational pattern**.
  - Strong **sentence fluency** with a variety of beginnings.
  - Poetic language with effective **word choice** and skillful use of repeated sounds (i.e., alliteration).
  - Sensory images; add details, **ideas**.
  - Figurative (sensory) imagery shows strong **ideas** and effective **word choice**.
2. **R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment** Begin with "Yesterday I learned . . ." or "I remember when . . ." and write about a time you learned to do something from a parent or grandparent. What did this person say (include quotes), do (daily activities or interesting behaviors), look like?
  - **Role:** Yourself
  - **Audience:** A group of peers in class, assembly, 4-H, church
  - **Format:** An oral presentation using posters or props.
  - **Topic:** Something you learned from an elder.
  - **Strong Verb: Describe** the person and the setting where you learned the activity, communicating as many details as you can to make the person and event real for your listener.

Then **explain** the steps in the process of doing the activity. Conclude with the most important **value** you learned as a result of doing the activity with a parent or grandparent.

3. **R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment** Remember when you were separated from your parents for a time (a few days, weeks, months, or forever due to death). Show what happened (who, what, when, where, how, and why) and then how you got past it. **Write** a letter about the event and **explain** what you learned from the experience. Students may use an earlier portfolio assignment as their prewriting activity.
  - **Role:** Yourself
  - **Audience:** The person(s) you left behind
  - **Format:** An expository letter with introduction, paragraphs of the narrative, concluding explanation.
  - **Topic:** A time you were separated from someone important to you.
  - **Strong Verb:** **Describe and narrate** the event from your perspective and **explain** what you learned.
4. **Finish** the sentence “**When I feel hurt or angry, I overcome it by . . .**” and provide an example of one situation. Explain what you did and whether it had positive or negative consequences. Conclude with an evaluation of the effect of your feelings and actions on yourself and on others involved. What **disturbed or confused** you about the situation and/or your reactions? This is writing just for yourself, and no one will read it unless you choose to let them read it.
5. **R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment** Choose a character in one of the three essays or imagine a person we never get to meet -- the child’s father, a young warrior, an elderly woman, the child’s teacher or speech coach, a student in the essay “An Indian Teacher Among Indians.” Image you are that person in place and time and **write** a journal from one day. What would you see, hear, smell, touch? What would you wish? What would you learn?
  - **Role:** A person in the stories we never meet.
  - **Audience:** Yourself as the character reflecting on the experience.
  - **Format:** A two-page hand-written journal.
  - **Topic:** An event or experience from the stories.
  - **Strong Verb:** **Describe** the event from your perspective and include your feelings and attitudes about the event.
6. Consider an event in the second essay where the child rebels. Is the child’s action justified? What if you were the child in the story? Put yourself in the place of the child and **write** a **one-page play** of the event as you would behave. Include no more than three characters.
7. **R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment** You are running for the school board that oversees an Indian boarding school. Based on what you have learned in this unit, identify one policy position that would be part of your campaign. **Write** a persuasive speech that clarifies your position and encourages the audience to vote for you.
  - **Role:** An adult in the early 1900s who is running for the school board of an Indian boarding school.
  - **Audience:** Community members who have the right to vote in such an election.
  - **Format:** A speech.
  - **Topic:** One policy you will advocate should you get elected.

- **Strong Verb: Explain** your policy and its consequences that will benefit the students. Based on your integrity and the strength of your policy, **persuade** the members to vote for you.
8. **Interview** an elder or the descendant of an elder in your community who has attended boarding school. Prepare a list of ten questions and give the elder the list ahead of time. Make arrangements to have an adult go with you to help you record the interview and ask relevant follow-up questions. Type a written transcription of the interview that incorporates the questions you have asked and the elder's responses. Check for spelling and punctuation errors and give the elder a draft, asking for feedback about information or names (spelling) you might not have recorded accurately. Revise and edit the transcription. Submit your written transcription and a digital copy of the interview to your tribal culture committee for their historical record.
  9. **R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment** It is 1901, and you have read the letters from Carlisle School's Captain Pratt and other educators, as well as the responses of Zitkala-Ša (see *Learning to Write "Indian:" The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature* by Amelia Katanski, chapter 3). Write a letter to the editor regarding the comments of each and state your position on the issue. Your letter may be **persuasive** or **expository**.
    - **Role:** An adult in 1901 who has read the letters to the editor.
    - **Audience:** Newspaper readers and/or newspaper editor.
    - **Format:** Letter to the editor.
    - **Topic:** The issues presented in the letters to the editor are included in the first part of this unit. Or students may locate the originals online and respond to those. They should be available in the newspaper's archives or the Library of Congress Archives.
    - **Strong Verb: Explain** your position. **Persuade** your readers to believe your idea or take some kind of action.
  10. **Write** your own **autobiographical essay** or tell a story from a period of time in your life. What will you include, exclude? Who will be your significant others, both positive and negative?



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## Appendix A

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“Trickster/Transformer Figure,” *Roots and Branches* by Dorothea Susag (41-42). Copyright 1998 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Used with permission.

### Trickster/Transformer Figure

Known by different names, genders, and behaviors, this intensely complex hero and antihero (in western European terms), can take the form of animals and humans, depending on the particular tribal tradition. The Sioux/Lakota call him **Iktomi**, the spider; the Nakota/Assiniboiné, **Inktomi**; the Salish, **Coyote**; the Indians of the Northwest, **Raven**; the Blackfeet, **Old Man** and **Napi**; the Abenaki, **Gluscabi**; the Crees in Montana and Canada, **Wisahkecahk**; the Cheyenne, **VeHo**; and to the Gros Ventre, **Nee Ot**.

Representing a wide range of possible human actions, the trickster is capable of much good but may also display the most undesirable human behaviors. With mischief on his mind, the hero may overreach, deceive, and manipulate others to get what he wants. Sometimes, he earns his “just” reward and brings ridicule to himself in the end. Through the stories, listeners learn how to imitate positive and creative behaviors, to understand the power or good which they may access, while also learning to recognize their own deceitful and fraudulent behaviors. They may also learn to recognize their own behaviors that are deceitful and fraudulent, along with learning to avoid stupidity -- and even death -- by being watchful and wary of those who might deceive them.

Early 20th century and contemporary Indian writers, such as Momaday, Zitkala-Ša, Vizenor, Welch, Bruchac, McNickle, Erdrich, and Earling, frequently incorporate the trickster and his/her wide range of behaviors in poetry, stories, and novels. In her introduction to *The Hawk is Hungry and Other Stories* by D’Arcy McNickle, Bridgit Hans includes McNickle’s explanation of the continuing importance of *Coyote* to the Salish People.

Indian story telling presents a contrasting view of man’s role in the historical process: the coyote tales are especially good for this. Coyote is rarely a hero, or if he starts out to be a hero invariably he ends up a scoundrel or he finds himself outsmarted. There is no mounting crises and no gratifying denouements. Life is an arrangement of reciprocal expectations and obligations, and no one is allowed to set himself up as a power unto himself.

Many traditional American Indian stories are ceremonial or sacred in a way that prohibits a wide sharing. Others are told so members of the community (young and old) will learn and practice behaviors that demonstrate the community’s values. Told to all ages, each might hear it over and over, with possibilities for a different experience and a different understanding each time.

As you and your students listen to a story, put yourselves into the story. However, you must respect Tony Incashola’s (Salish Culture Committee) words:

. . . Respect the integrity or value of the story for the community; learn about why we have stories: because someone cared enough to share and to carry on. Remember that stories belong to people; they are the personal collective history and memory of a people; tell the history of native people accurately, and always remember that these stories represent a diversity of people.

## Appendix B

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Revision of “Yankton Reservation: 1858-1902” in *Roots and Branches* by Dorothea Susag (91-93). Copyright 1998 by the National Council of Teachers of English. Used with permission.

### **Yankton Reservation History as Reported in *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs (1958-1902)***

#### **(A Portion of the Historical and Geographical Context)**

An important aspect of Zitkala-Ša’s heritage which informs her writing in *American Indian Stories* was the movement west and the consequential territorial and physical losses for her Yankton people. Previous to 1800, her ancestors had traveled across half the continent, following the migration of buffalo from the upper Mississippi River valley to the Black Hills. In the early 1800s, because of their location near the Missouri River, many forts and trading posts were established on their land. According to Edwin Thompson Denig, a trader who recorded the Plains Indians’ customs for Father Pierre Jean DeSmet, this contact results in the loss of “a great many [Indians], by diseases caught along” this California route (Denig, 38).

In the Treaty of Prairie du Chien, 1830, 2.2 million acres were ceded to the US Government. In 1850, the Yankton band still claimed 13.5 million acres from the upper Des Moines to the upper Missouri Rivers valleys. But when more traders and settlers migrated to this area and “squatted,” pressuring the US Government to move the Yanktons to a reservation, the Yanktons were forced, on April 19, 1858, to cede all remaining land to the government except 431,000 acres lying 30 miles along the Missouri River. The tribe was to receive \$1,600,000 (about ten cents an acre) in decreasing annuity payments until 1908 (Hoover, 13-31).

Within the Yankton Reservation boundaries, and with the above annuity funds, federal agents would work toward dismantling the tribal structure and building European-American civilization on a farming base. Every year, agents, school superintendents, and physicians would file their reports with the Department of the Interior, describing the reservation as they saw it, and the economic, political, and cultural situation of the reservation Indians. However, despite the agents’ efforts to demonstrate the success of these programs, the actual reports proved the devastating effects of farming policies, housing policies, and boarding schools on the lives of all Yankton men, women, and children.

The following information appears in the primary documents of *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs, Report of the Commissioner and Appendixes*. Rather than using page numbers for data, the more accessible and meaningful year and the agent’s name, when available or relevant, are identified within the text.

In 1874, an agent recommended the Yanktons be moved to Indian Territory because the country on the Missouri lacked sufficient resources for farming. Another in 1877 called it a “woodless and desolate prairie.” In three out of every four years, fields yielded as little as one bushel to the acre due to hailstorms, grasshoppers, “hot blasting wind,” and drought so severe that shade trees died. In 1896 when they did raise a good crop, the agent reported the Indians were forced to take a “seriously low price” because they had no place to store it, and “white neighbors would never pay a fair price.” By 1902 the agent reported no more seed wheat was provided since it cost as much to produce as it

would bring in a sale. No doubt agents were reluctant to admit their own failures to build successful farming operations, so they blamed the land, the neighboring whites, and the Indians.

Even as the agents claimed progress toward establishing native self-sufficiency and assimilation, these reports also betray the truth of another story, a story preserved in the walls of damp-sod houses and government boarding schools. It is the story of a people's rapid disintegration, yet silent resistance, to unrelenting oppression.

In 1876, the year of Getrude Simmons' birth, the agent said that if the rations were removed, there would be "utter destitution and great suffering, and a general breakup of the tribe." Yet eight years later, the agent, J.F. Kinney, with paternalistic tone, strongly recommended issuing less flour to coerce the Yanktons into compliance. Kinney wrote, "less rations, more farming, more self-reliance, less dependence, more manhood."

In 1874, St. Paul's Episcopal boarding school for girls and boys, three day schools, and two Presbyterian schools served 200 Yankton Reservation children. In contrast with the government schools, St. Paul's was still educating in the Dakota language in 1890. In 1900, Agent John W. Harding recommended funding cease to St. Paul's because "it [was] more sympathetic with Indians in conflict with Government policies." An agent in 1880 offered the most praise for Carlisle, an off-reservation school in Pennsylvania, where Zitkala-Ša would teach and write her essays that criticized the policies and practices at Carlisle.

However, by 1887 and continuing into the next century, agents rejected this same school in favor of the reservation's Industrial Boarding School. Not only did schools like Carlisle take their "brightest" students, but one agent disapproved of the children's extended separation from parents. Children would "lose their health in Eastern schools." Some school officials objected to eastern schools because they would have to fill reservation school quotas with "children earlier rejected for ill health.

Still, by 1899, only two reservation schools remained, and in 1901 St. Paul's school closed. Repeatedly agents and report school superintendents complained about the poor average attendance and parents who did not value sending children to school. Although education in English was a primary goal of Indian policy, two generations after its introduction to the Yanktons, not even a third could read or do business in English. J.F. Kinney reported that Chief Stuck-by-the-Ree "opposed formal education for Indian children for awhile." These facts indicate not only the failure of a government program, but they also demonstrate the Yankton people's resistance to forces which would extinguish their language and culture.

On May 21, 1895, the government proclaimed in the Allotment Act, "lands ceded by Yankton tribe of Sioux Indians are open to settlement. These lands shall be offered for sale to actual and bonafide settlers." The Allotment Act contributed to the further loss of Indian territorial integrity when much of the "surplus" land was purchased and leased by non-Indians.

By 1902, numerous new lights dotted the reservation landscape, many sod houses had replaced teepees, and parents resisted sending children to reservation schools because they feared they would die. Physician reports proved the parents' fears were justified. According to the population numbers included in the *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior*, the numbers of Yanktons and mixed bloods on the Yankton Reservation dropped by over a third from a population of 2,600 in 1857 to 1,678 in 1902. Epidemics of sore eyes, sore throats, influenza, consumption, scrofula (tuberculosis), measles, chicken pox, and whooping cough raged through these Yankton people, especially in the schools where such highly contagious diseases found captive victims. Although one angry agent in the

1884 suggested the prevalence of disease was due to “stupid indifference to laws of health,” a more sympathetic physician in 1901 blamed “poverty and one-room houses devoid of ventilation.” In 1894 a physician indicated that few were disease free; in 1899, 21 children died before the end of the school year, and in 1901, 95 people died due to “consumption and old age.” The agency report in 1902 showed a comparison between the death rate among the white population surrounding the reservation – eight in 1,000 – and among the Indians -- 24 in 1,000. The Yankton people were dying; the Indians themselves knew it, and so did the agents. Mothers would keep children home to prevent their contracting a deadly disease, and agents suspected the deaths of children were kept secret so the families could continue to receive maximum rations.

This was the situation for Zitkala-Ša’s people, and for the writer herself, at the time she first published her autobiographical essays in the *Atlantic Monthly Magazine* in January, February, and March 1900.

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*Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs, Report of the Commissioner and Appendixes*

*Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri* by Edwin Thompson Denig

*Indians of North America: The Yankton Sioux* by Herbert T. Hoover



## Appendix C

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### Books (novels and non-fiction chapter books) about boarding schools that can inspire students' further reading

- *Sweetgrass Basket* by Marlene Carvell  
**Summary:** Mattie and Sarah are two Mohawk sisters 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, but they find ways to protect their culture, their memories of their family life, and their love for each other under this forced assimilation.
- *Children of the Indian Boarding Schools* by Holly Littlefield  
**Summary:** A photo essay about Indian boarding schools -- 1879 to the present -- in three chapters with further resources, photographs of children at schools across the country, a map of the off-reservation Indian boarding schools in the United States, and a timeline.
- *As Long as the Rivers Flow* by Larry Loyie (Cree) with Constance Brissenden  
**Summary:** In June 1944, ten-year-old Lawrence learns that a priest will take him and other children far away to a school where they will live in dormitories and learn English. To keep him strong despite the separation, this story shows how Lawrence learned through observation, practice, and stories and ceremonies to gain the skills needed to survive, as well as the values, language, and history that enabled him to pass on his heritage.
- *Counting Coup: Becoming a Crow Chief on the Reservation and Beyond* by Joseph Medicine Crow (Crow)  
**Summary:** Having accomplished all four coups, Joe Medicine Crow is declared a full-fledged Crow war chief, the last traditional chief of the Crows. There is information on traditional education (14-16), Baptist school (45-47), public school (67-74), and boarding school (95-100).
- *Rabbit-Proof Fence* by Doris Nugi Garimara Pilkington  
**Summary:** Doris Pilkington is the daughter of Molly, the child of an Australian Aboriginal woman and a white father. Like the boarding-school experience of Native children in America, Molly and two sisters were taken by force to be educated, assimilated, and trained to work for whites in a school miles from their home.
- *Growing Up Native American: An Anthology* edited by Patricia Riley (Cherokee)  
**Summary:** The "Schooldays" section has selections from Francis LaFlesche, Lamé Deer, Louise Erdrich, and Basil Johnston. See *Roots and Branches* pages 131-132 for a detailed summary.
- *My name is Seepeetza* by Shirley Stirling (Interior Salish)  
**Summary:** Written in diary form, Sterling has created a novel based on her own experiences. As a ten-year-old attending an Indian residential school, she is forced to deny all that being Indian means to her.

- *Native American Literature: An Anthology* edited by Lawana Trout

**Summary:** This book allows readers the opportunity to learn about the diversity of the experiences of authors from 50 tribes from the United States and Canada. See especially “Chapter 8 Language and Learning in Two Worlds” which has excerpts by Albert White Hat, Sr., Luther Standing Bear, Zitkala-Ša, Louise Erdrich, Sherman Alexie, Nora Dauenhauer, Larry Evers, Felipe S. Molina, and N. Scott Momaday.