

*Model Teaching Unit*  
*- Language Arts -*  
*Secondary Level*  
*For*

# ***American Indian Stories***

By  
*Zitkala-Ša Gertrude (Simmons) Bonnin*

Unit written by Dorothea M. Susag [dotsusag@3riversdbs.net](mailto:dotsusag@3riversdbs.net)

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

## **Anchor Text**

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Zitkala-Ša (Yankton/Dakota). *American Indian Stories*. Introduction by Susan Rose Dominguez. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. 195 pp. ISBN: 0-8032-9917-6

## **Fast Facts**

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<b>Genre</b>	Autobiographical Essay and Short Story
<b>Suggested Grade Level</b>	Ninth Grade
<b>Tribe (s)</b>	Yankton/Dakota Sioux
<b>Place</b>	Yankton Reservation South Dakota, Boarding Schools
<b>Time</b>	1880s to 1900

## **About the Author and Illustrator**

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Scholars believe that 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 Nakota mother, Ellen *Tate / 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 that 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 that 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 English 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, 1850-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 successes 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 able 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 (7-45), "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 ADakota@ 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 of her Dakota culture.

In the second essay (47-80), "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’s 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 (81-100), “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 doesn’t understand how the prejudice and racism had 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 settlers, 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 (99).”

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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- *Atlantic Monthly Magazine*, current copies for students to see.
- *Atlantic Monthly* (1900), with Zitkala-Ša’s essays online -- Issue 507 January; Issue 508 February; Issue 509 March; <http://digital.library.cornell.edu/a/atla/atla.1900.html>
- Banks, J.A. (1995). “Multicultural education and curriculum transformation.” *The Journal of Negro Education*, 64 (4), 390-400. Banks identifies the four approaches to the implementation of multicultural education as listed in the table below this list: Social Action, Transformative, Additive, Contributions. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2967262?seq=1>
- Cahoon, Heather (Pend d’Oreille). *Elk Thirst*. Missoula, MT: University of Montana and the Merriam Frontier Foundation. 2005. 59 pp.
- Greene, Jennifer (Salish) *What I Keep*. Albany, NY: Greenfield Review Press, 1999. 77 pp. ISBN 087886-141-6;
- Holmes, Krys with Susan C. Dailey, Teacher Consultant and Dave Walter, Historian. “The Early Reservation Years.” *Montana: Stories of the Land*. Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 2008. (208-226) <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/StoriesOfTheLand>
- Jaeger, Lowell, ed. *Poems Across the Big Sky: An Anthology of Montana Poets*. Kalispell, MT: Many Voices Press, Flathead Valley Community College, 2007. 249 pp. ISBN: 978-0-9795185-0-8

- Katanski, Amelia V. *Learning To Write "Indian": The Boarding School Experience and American Indian Literature*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press. 2005.
- Marshall, Joseph M. III (Lakota). *How Not To Catch Fish and Other Adventures of Iktomi*. Illustrated by Joseph Chamberlain. Music by John Two-Hawks. Eureka Springs, AK: Circle Studios, 2005. 55 pp. ISBN: 0-9768022-0-1 Accompanying CD includes several of the stories.
- *Montana Mosaic: 20<sup>th</sup> Century People and Events*. An educational series from the Montana Historical Society. Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society and West of Kin Productions, 2006. Chapter 4: Dislocation/Relocation (Provided by OPI to school libraries and available online: <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/MontanaMosaic>)
- *Oceti Sakowin: People of the Seven Council Fires and Bridging the Gap: Native American Education*. A production of South Dakota Public Broadcasting. 2008. (Provided by OPI to all school libraries.)
- Smoker, M. L. (Assiniboine) *Another Attempt at Rescue*. Brooklyn, NY: Hanging Loose Press, 2005. 64 pp. ISBN 1-931236-51-8
- Sneve, Virginia Driving Hawk (Lakota). *The Trickster and the Troll*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1997. 108 pp. ISBN 0-8032-9263-5 (Introduction explains Iktomi)
- Susag, Dorothea. *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature Themes, Lessons, and Bibliographies*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 1998. ISBN 0-8141-4195- (To utilize background information that this unit requires, teachers will need obtain to this resource.)
- Susag, Dorothea. "Zitkala-Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin): A Power(full) Literary Voice." *Studies in American Indian Literatures*. 1993 Winter 3-24. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20736763?seq=1> (This essay provides essential background for a comprehensive explanation of the purpose and implementation required in this unit of this unit)
- "The People of the Great Plains Parts I and II" and "The People of the Northeast." *The Native Americans*. Video. One CNN Center, Atlanta, GA: TBS Productions, 1994.
- "Wounded Knee." Episode 5. *We Shall Remain*. DVD. PBS. 2009. Episode 5: 39-46 and 74-78 <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/> All the DVD's from this series are not specifically referenced in lessons because they have just been released. However, they are most valuable. Episodes can be viewed on line.
- Zacharias, Joanne (2008) (Shakopee Mdewakaton Sioux). *Taku Wadaka He? (What Do You See?)*. Illustrated by Steven Smith. Edina, MN: Beaver's Pond Press, Inc., 2004, 2008. 30 pp. ISBN: 978-1-59298-226-4
- Zitkala-Ša (Yankton/Dakota). *American Indian Stories*. Introduction by Susan Rose Dominguez. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2003. 195 pp. ISBN:0-8032-9917-6
- Zitkala-Ša . *Dance in a Buffalo Skull*. Illustrated by S.D. Nelson (Lakota). Pierre, SD: South Dakota State Historical Society Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-9777955-2-9
- Zitkala-Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin) *Old Indian Legends*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985. 165 pp. ISBN: 0-8032-9903-6 (See review in *Roots and Branches* 212)

## Implementation Level, Essential Understandings and MT Content Standards

Implementation Levels		Essential Understandings - Big Ideas		Montana Content Standards	
4	Social Justice	1-There is great diversity between tribes.	4-Tribes reserved a portion of their land-base through treaties.	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, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 3.3, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4
3	Transformative	2-There is great diversity between individuals within any tribe.	5-History is told from subjective experience and perspective.		
2	Additive	3-Ideologies, traditions, beliefs, and spirituality continue through a system of oral traditions.	6-Federal Indian policies shifted through six major periods.	Literature – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.4, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1, 5.3	Social Studies – 1.1, 2.6, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.7, 6.1, 6.3, 6.4
1	Contributions		7-Three forms of sovereignty exist in the US - federal, state, & tribal.		

## Learning Targets

- 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 to 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* and the poetry and stories in this unit.
- I respond to the writing 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 6 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

- This single unit provides **two approaches** for a study of Zitkala-Ša's stories:
- **#1 - Approach and Reading in Day 4 - 12:** This reading focuses on comprehension, engagement with the story, and students' connections with their own lives.
    - Although Day 4 – Day 12 are allocated for the first reading, it's 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.

- **#2 - 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 links might help students search for answers:

1. <http://www.kstrom.net/isk/maps/dakotas/sd.html>  
Reservations in South Dakota, with links to specific tribes. It also includes complete scripts of some treaties.
2. <http://www.fortpecktribes.org>
3. <https://sdtribalrelations.sd.gov/tribes/Yankton.aspx>
4. <https://sdtribalrelations.sd.gov/tribes.aspx>
5. <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/sioux-treaty/>  
Sioux Treaty of 1868

Use these and other sites you can access when searching for "Yankton tribes" or "Yankton Reservation." Students should be aware of the perspective of various sites: tourism, Native interests, government documents, etc. They may find photos, both historical and contemporary.

**Teacher Tip:** You may use the information in the sources listed below to prompt their thinking. We don't want to drown them in too much information. We just want to build on their previous knowledge and stimulate their curiosity to begin the 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* (1974-1902)
- 3) <http://sdpb.sd.gov/EducationalServicesGuide/etvprograms/os.asp> (OPI has provided the film *Oceti Sakowin: People of the Seven Council Fires and Bridging the Gap: Native American Education* to school libraries)
- 4) Susag, Dorothea. "Zitkala-Ša (Gertrude Simmons Bonnin): A Power(full) Literary Voice." *Studies in American Indian Literatures*. 1993 Winter 3-24.  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/20736763?seq=1> (This essay provides essential background for a comprehensive explanation of the purpose and implementation required in this unit of this unit.)



7. <http://sdpb.sd.gov/EducationalServicesGuide/etvprograms/os.asp> (OPI has provided the film *Oceti Sakowin: People of the Seven Council Fires and Bridging the Gap: Native American Education* to school libraries)
8. "Chapter 4: Dislocation/Relocation." (15 minutes) *Montana Mosaic: 20<sup>th</sup> Century People and Events*. An educational series from the Montana Historical Society. Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society and West of Kin Productions, 2006. (Provided by OPI to school libraries and available online: <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/MontanaMosaic>.)

- 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. Sharing:** 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's merely an introduction.

**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.

**Day 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 that there is much more to Zitkala Ša's writing than meets the eye. [https://collections.library.cornell.edu/moa\\_new/browse.html](https://collections.library.cornell.edu/moa_new/browse.html)

- 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: [www.johntwohawks.com](http://www.johntwohawks.com)

**Teacher Tip:** If possible, invite a local elder or traditional storyteller to your classroom. If it is appropriate, ask them to tell a story about their tribes' trickster/transformer figure. A wealth of online speakers is available from the Trailtribes.org online site: [http://www.montanatribes.org/digital\\_archives/matrix.php?page=intro](http://www.montanatribes.org/digital_archives/matrix.php?page=intro)  
 Also, *Turtle Island Storytellers Network* is a website with Montana tribal storytellers listed. [http://www.turtleislandstorytellers.net/tis\\_montana.html](http://www.turtleislandstorytellers.net/tis_montana.html) You may also read from Zitkala Ša's collection of Iktomi stories: *Old Indian Legends*.

Please consider the following:

- Most of the lessons in these stories are implicit rather 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. As 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:

1. (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.
2. (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.
3. (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.
4. (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 doesn't have the confidence to fight him off. Knowing he can't be as strong as Old Bear, the other animals convince Iktomi that he must do the right thing: tell the truth about how he had tricked Old Bear.

- C. **Introduce Zitkala Ša and *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 (7-11) "My Mother," the first section from "Impressions of an Indian Childhood."
- B. **Portfolio #2 Write** in response to the following prompt: D. I. C. E. Write for half a page about what ***Disturbed, Interested, Confused, or Enlightened*** you as you listened to this short section.
- C. **Activity:** After they write, ask students to share their responses in a circle discussion.
- D. **Assign:** (12-45) Sections II – VII.

### 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's the effect of that on you as a reader?
3. Explain the ritual of storytelling that 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 the 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 on the left and what you found surprising on the right, using phrases or short sentences.
- C. **Activity:** 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* (91-93). It could help answer some of the students’ questions. However, the primary focus for this first read is to engage the students in the story and to have them make connections between the characters and themselves.

**Day Six and Seven**

- A. **Activity:** 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 have 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) that 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, your friends, your chores, what makes you happy or sad or fearful. What stories will you include?

**Day Eight**

- A. **Begin by reading** aloud to the students (47-51) “The Land of the Big Red Apples,” the first section from “The School Days of an Indian Girl”.
- B. **Portfolio #7** Write in response to the following prompt: D. I. C. E, Write for half a page about what **Disturbed, Interested, Confused, or Enlightened** you as you listened to this short section.
- E. **Activity:** After they write, ask students to share their responses in a circle discussion.
- F. **As a class, watch a video about Indian boarding schools:** “Chapter 4” in *Montana Mosaic: 20<sup>th</sup> Century People and Events* (15 minutes) available online: <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/MontanaMosaic> or the “Wounded Knee DVD in *We Shall Remain*. PBS. 2009. Episode 5: 39-46 and 74-78 (11 minutes total) <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/>
- G. **View Images of the Carlisle Indian School** held by the Archives and Special Collections of Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA: <http://archives.dickinson.edu/collection-descriptions/carlisle-indian-school-photos-flickr-collection>
- H. **Assign:** (52-80) Sections II – VII.

### **Day Nine**

- A. **Activity:** Invite students to talk about a time when they had to leave home for an extended period of time.
- What did you miss?
  - How did you deal with the distance or loneliness?
  - How did you communicate with those they've left behind?
  - What made the adjustment to the new place easy or difficult?
  - How did you make new friends?
  - 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's 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. **Activity:** 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 this Zitkala-Ša's essay and her response to injustice, what have you learned about yourself and the situation in your own story?
- C. **Assign:** "An Indian Teacher Among Indians" (81-99) Sections I – IV

### **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 Dawee'?
  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 had 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 in response to the following prompt: **D. I. C. E.** Write for half a page about what **Disturbed, Interested, Confused, or Enlightened** you as you read this final essay.

**C. Activity:** After they write, ask students to share their responses in a circle discussion.

**D. Portfolio #10:** Read “On Going Home” by Heather Cahoon (Pend d’Oreille) in *Elk Thirst* (49). 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’ve been away from home for an extended period of time, and now you 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’ll see? What do you remember that keeps you going?

**E. Activity: 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 kinds of problems might we have with our “inner selves”?
2. Explain the last paragraph as you might understand it? Does the narrator give an answer to the problem? Do you know where she stands?

### **Day Twelve**

**A. Activity: 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. Activity: Read the picture book by Joanne Zacharias (Shakopee Mdewakaton Sioux Community). *Taku Wadaka He? (What Do You See?)*.** 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 didn’t 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

### Read poems by Montana poets

1. **“Missions”** by Heather Cahoon (Pend d’Oreille) in *Elk Thirst* (28-29). Montana Indians suffered through the effects of boarding schools. In “Missions,” 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 (Salish) in *What I Keep* (50). 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* (196). Lois Red Elk writes in her short biography that “in order to convey the whole story of our lives, I also write about the harsh and disturbing” (231). 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 didn’t. 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 Mandy Smoker (Assiniboine) in *Another Attempt at Rescue* (46). 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 to make peace. The end of Zitkala Ša’s essays show that she would fight for freedom and rights another way. She did it through words and the legal system.
5. **“Casualties”** by Mandy Smoker (Assiniboine) in *Another Attempt at Rescue* (34). 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 that you have failed to keep alive? How can you “begin” to recover what might be lost if you don’t carry it on?

### 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 image in each.

## Day Fourteen

### Activity:

A. Students may read from Chapter 3 of *Learning to Write “Indian:” The Boarding-School Experience and American Indian Literature* by Amelia Katanski, University of Oklahoma Press, 2005.

According to Katanski, “The Carlisle Press [and others like it] attempted to regulate representations of Indian identity in its school newspapers by creating an ‘Indian voice’ that ventriloquized the social evolutionism of Pratt and his cohorts.” (16) They even misread the narratives. “Pratt clearly sought to use Zitkala-Ša’s literary success as proof of her ‘representative’ acculturation, but her fierce anti-boarding-school prose defied his attempt to control her presentation of herself and of her educational experience (17).”

To criticize Zitkala-Ša's writing in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Carlisle's newspaper *The Red Man* reprinted Zitkala Sa's essay on "School Days of an Indian Girl." In the same edition, Richard H. Pratt wrote a letter reacting to the essay this way:

*We do not for a moment believe that "Zitkala-Ša" desires to injure the cause of her own people, whose title to the blessings of enlightenment and civilization has so lately found a general recognition, but we do feel that the home-sick pathos—nay, more, the underlying bitterness of her story will cause readers unfamiliar with Indian schools to form entirely the wrong conclusions. Her pictures are not, perhaps, untrue in themselves, but taken by themselves, they are sadly misleading.* *Red Man*, February 1900 (8) Carlisle Indian School Press, Carlisle, PA. 1888-1900 and 1909-1917.

The April 1900 edition of *Red Man* printed a portion of Zitkala-Ša's response to Pratt's comments: *To stir up views and earnest comparison of theories was one of the ways in which I hoped [my essay] would work a benefit to my people. No one can dispute my own impressions and bitterness!*

According to Katanski, "Zitkala-Ša associates learning English with self-protection and rebellion . . . which later provided the means for her to wage a linguistic rebellion against the boarding-school ideology (122). . . . Why did a few essays and a memoir provoke such heated and intense responses on the part of Pratt and the boarding-school press? Because 'narratives are not only structures of meaning, but structures of power as well.'" (129) How was that power expressed? Through published stories and newspapers that were tools of reform where Indians could express the "other side of the story." They were "creative spaces for self-articulation and for complex, syncretic identity formation out of a restrictive, potentially genocidal institution (130)."

Katanski argues that Zitkala-Ša put "a human face on the wrongs done to Indians at the turn of the century (161)." Throughout her life, she used her education "to fight tirelessly against many institutions that attempted to force Indian people to abandon their cultures altogether (164)."

- B. <http://home.epix.net/~landis/histry.html> This is the History of Carlisle School Site. It might be interesting for students to search this to see how the information either contradicts or possibly supports what Zitkala- Ša has written.
- Discuss the responses of the 1900 audience and Zitkala- Ša's written responses.
  - Were their criticisms justified? Were her responses justified?
  - Where do we see current statements about injustice published?
  - Are the writers themselves criticized for having spoken out?

### **Day Fifteen and Sixteen**

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

1. The intimate family life of her childhood;
2. The late nineteenth-century Yankton Reservation experience;
3. Lakota/Dakota history and traditional culture,
4. Classical and Judeo-Christian literature, and
5. 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. Holmes, Krys (2008) with Susan C. Dailey, Teacher Consultant and Dave Walter, Historian. "The Early Reservation Years." *Montana: Stories of the Land.* Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press. (208-226). This is the new Montana History textbook for Middle-School. Since many schools have these books, perhaps you could borrow them from the history teacher so students can read this chapter or you can access it online: <https://mhs.mt.gov/education/StoriesOfTheLand/Part2>

2. Susag, Dorothea. *Roots and Branches: A Resource of Native American Literature Themes, Lessons, and Bibliographies* 1998. "Appendix B: Historical Context" (248-249) Pay particular attention to the following: 1887 Dawes Act or General Allotment Act; the Consequences of Allotment Policy for tribes; August 15, 1894-Parent Consent for Educ. Act
  3. Appendix A: Trickster/Transformer Figure from *Roots and Branches* (41-42)
  4. Appendix B: Yankton Reservation History as Reported in *Annual Reports of the Department of the Interior and Indian Affairs* (1974-1902) (A Portion of the Historical and Geographical Context)
  5. In *Roots and Branches*, refer students to each of the following:
    - **The Lakota System of Bands and Alliances** (90-91) (Historical, Geographical, Linguistic and Cultural Contexts)
    - **A Classification of Lakota Cosmology** (93-94) (Linguistic and Cultural) This won't require discussion at this point but students should have access to this vocabulary list.
- B. You may have students watch on line the Boarding School sections** from "Wounded Knee." Episode 5. *We Shall Remain*. DVD. PBS. 2009, Episode 5: (39-46) and (74-78) <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/weshallremain/> Or, if you have access to the PBS *Native Americans* series of videos, have students watch sections that apply to the time and places in these essays in "The People of the Great Plains Parts I and II" and "The People of the Northeast", particularly the segment on Indian Boarding Schools.
- C. Portfolio #13** When reading each of these resources, ask students to make note of information they didn't know before reading it. Since they've participated in preliminary research, and the teacher has provided some information from these sources, they might have a handle on much of it already. Consequently, this might provide a review more than anything.
- D. Assign (7-45)** "Impressions of an Indian Childhood."

### **Day Seventeen**

#### **Introduction to Literary 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 3-5, under the following rules:

1. **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're not preoccupied with sharing details from their own lives. "Pick a partner" can quickly deteriorate into cliques and off-topic conversation.
2. **Select a scribe and a speaker.** At the end of the reading and note taking time, the speaker in each group will share their discussion findings with the rest of the class.
3. **Respect your own right to learn.** Students must give their full attention to the task at hand and come prepared to class.
4. **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 pp. 93-94 of *Roots and Branches*. What evidences of any of these symbols might you see in the text? Pay attention to the name of Gertrude Simmons' 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** *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 (as seen on p. 23). 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** 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 evidences of irony?

**Hints for the Teacher:**

- (1) Mother teaches her child to never infringe on the rights of others – contrast with the uninvited American presence.
- (2) Iktomi has no conception 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.
- (3) 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 and loss and anger.

**Hints for the Teacher:** "Heartless paleface" that has forced people away and stolen land, Wiyaka-Napbina has "long lean arms" and is "driven by extreme hunger," "Bad paleface".

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

**Hints for the Teacher:** She's 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** "wigwam" (However, this is an Algonquin word, not Dakota, that Eastern readers would have been familiar with) "Weather-stained canvas" (Before reservations, the tipi's 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.

**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.



**Hints for the Teacher:** Child suffers “many trials,” 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,” Her 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** “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 of the 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** “greatly vexed,” “Impudence,” “insipid hospitality”.

J. **Class Discussion:** with students sharing what they’ve learned in their workshopping session.

K. **Assign (47-80) "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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** Cutting their hair, changing their dress, brutal boarding-school regimen, forbidding children to speak their own language.

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

**Hints for the Teacher:** 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 evidences of irony in the text.

#### **Hints for the Teacher:**

- The children think they are going to a “Wonderland”; instead, it’s 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 that 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’s the one who has been steeped in it at school.
- She’s 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:**

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

**Hints for the Teacher:** Think about who is trying to trick or fool another and how he/she ends up looking the fool or evil one himself.

- G. **Class Discussion** with students sharing what they've learned in their workshopping session.

H. **Assign (81-100) "An Indian Teacher."**

**Day Nineteen**

**Workshop Activity #3 from "An Indian Teacher"**

- A. Look for references to Wind.

**Hints for the Teacher:** She's 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** 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's really thinking?

**Hints for the Teacher:** She is not fooled by the patronizingly “superior” employer.

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

**Hints for the Teacher:** The driver is “fumbling” and alcoholic and laughable; the white teacher smokes opium, and 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:**

- 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 that this essay portrays.
- H. Explain what the writer may have meant in saying she found a "new way of solving the problem."

**Hints for the Teacher:** Perhaps she will write and publish the truth.

**Class Discussion** with students sharing what they've learned in their workshopping session.

Teachers may direct the following question to the class as a whole:

- What aspects of this child's life are missing from this story? Sometimes what is missing tells us more about a writer or 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.

**Hints for the Teacher:** Facial features of the mother and her child, a father, extended family with the exception of a few, paleface names, names of boarding schools and teacher, 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.** An example of a form the groups can fill out is found on this site under Cooperative Learning Tools. <https://www.dailyteachingtools.com/>
3. **Essay response to workshopping experience:**
  - **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.
  - **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?
  - **Paragraph #3** Select one question or issue which your group discussed, and write about the arguments, discussion, conclusions. You may write more than one paragraph here.
  - **Paragraph #4** Discuss your reaction to a particular character in *American Indian Stories*. Did you like him/her or not? Do you have sympathy for him/her? Why or why not? When did you BEGIN to feel sympathy for the character?
  - **Paragraph #5** Conclusion: Some say that one of the powers of literature and our ACTIVE involvement with it is that 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 as "**Portfolio.**"
  - 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: the student's self-assessment of his/her writing, the student's

personal response to reading such a work, a short essay about where the student found him/herself in this novel. Students might ask themselves, how am I changed? Teachers might give them the list of “Learning 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 for a Final exam:**
- How would the story change if the protagonist were male instead of female?
  - 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?
  - 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.
  - How has memory helped Zitkala-Ša to survive?
  - Name three lessons Zitkala-Ša learned through the boarding-school experience. Which lesson was the most important? Explain your answer.
  - 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?
  - What are the ways people demonstrate respect in these essays? Explain how each situation defines respect.
  - 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?
  - What are Zitkala-Ša’s communicative goals? Who were her audiences?
  - Think about what we know or teach about the slave trade, system of slavery in the U.S., 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 and 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 reservations, have very strong Christian beliefs, they might have difficulty with the challenges posed by this writer. It’s important to help them understand the perceptions of the children and the 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’s also important that 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 of the **Portfolio Assignments** might generate some very personal responses. Offer students the opportunity to write without anyone reading what they’ve written. Otherwise, they might substitute names to protect the identity of individuals mentioned. It is possible for you to require writing that you will never read, but you must be able to trust the honor of the individual when he/she says 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 those words themselves, they are more apt to remember the definitions. Sometimes a word can be defined using context clues and won’t require a formal definition.

## Extension Activities

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### Independent Reading Options

- Giago, Tim (Oglala Lakota). *Children Left Behind: The Dark Legacy of Indian Mission Boarding Schools*. Illustrated by Denise Giago. Santa Fe, NM: Clear Light Publishing, 2006. 166 pp. ISBN: 1-57416-086-9.
  - “*Children Left Behind* 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 to 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 & CEO, American Indian College Fund.
  - “*Children Left Behind*, written by respected journalist Tim Giago, is a fascinating mix of personal stories and history about 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 early 21<sup>st</sup> century.” Wilma Mankiller, Former Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation.
- Olsen, Sylvia with Rita Morris and Ann Sam (Tsartlip First Nation) (2001). *No Time to Say Goodbye: Children’s Stories of Kuper Island Residential School*. Winlaw, BC: Sono Nis Press. ISBN: 10-1-55039-121-6 186 pp. 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.
- Rappaport, Doreen (1997). *The Flight of Red Bird: The Life of Zitkala-Ša*. New York: Puffin Books. 185 pp. ISBN: 0-14-130465-0 This is a biography that uses the writings of Zitkala-Ša, including the three essays, and further research by Doreen Rappaport.

## General Activities

1. **Activity: *To Learn a New Way*.** Montana Historical Society Education Office. (2005)Boarding School Trunk from the Montana Historical Society.  
<https://mhs.mt.gov/education/Footlocker>
2. **Activity:** 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 the following: what the child/student/teacher says, does, and thinks; what others say of her; her conflicts and resolutions.
3. **Activity:** Students can create a **Geographical Setting Map** of each essay, with rivers and landscape, climate, economics, population, present location, and the way the land in that area is used today and where the Yankton Sioux live.
  - a. In addition, they can search the web for photos and more research.
  - b. <http://home.epix.net/~landis/index.html> "It is our purpose to respectfully honor those students and their descendants who lived the experiment, to celebrate with those who prospered from it, and to grieve with those whose lives were diminished by it. This is a history that belongs to all Americans - the identities of all Americans are shaped by the Carlisle experiment. Much of the text on these pages reflect the collaborative efforts of Barbara Landis and Genevieve Bell, and are not associated with the Cumberland County Historical Society. Our 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 respective nations."
4. **Activity:** As students read on their own, have them keep a chart that includes two lists of situations: one where individuals demonstrate **respect**, and another 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. **Activity:** Draw or paint pictures of all settings in the story.

## Writing Activities

1. **Activity:** Using scanned pages and a smart board or students' books, use text to teach or reinforce the **6 Traits of Writing**.
  - o Effective use of transitions to establish a logical **organizational pattern**,
  - o Strong **sentence fluency** with a variety of beginnings,
  - o Poetic language with effective **word choice** and skillful use of repeated sounds (i.e. alliteration).
  - o Sensory images add details, **ideas**.
  - o Figurative (sensory) imagery shows strong **ideas** and effective **word choice**.
2. **Activity: 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 he/she say (include quotes), do (daily activities or interesting behaviors), look like?
  - o **Role:** Yourself
  - o **Audience:** A group of peers in class, assembly, 4-H, church
  - o **Format:** An oral presentation using posters or props
  - o **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 the 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. **Activity: R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment:** Remember when you were separated from your parents for a time (a few days, week, months, or forever due to death). Show what happened (who, what, when, where, how, and why) and then how did you get 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. **Activity:** 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. **Activity: 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. Imagine 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 that 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.
  - **Describe** the event from your perspective and include your feelings and attitudes about the event.
6. **Activity:** 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. **Activity: R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment:** You are running for the school board that oversees an Indian Boarding School. Based on what you’ve 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 1900's 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. **Activity:** 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've asked in 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. **Activity: R.A.F.T.S. writing assignment:** It is 1901 and you live where you've 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 audience and/or newspaper editor.
  - **Format:** Letter to the editor.
  - **Topic:** The issues presented in the letters to the editor as 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 to take some kind of action.
10. **Activity: Write a poem** in response to your experience with this unit.
11. **Activity: 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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- Child, Brenda J. (Red Lake Ojibway). *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2000 143 pp. ISBN:0-8032-6405-4 This text is based on letters written by students, parents and administrators from the Flandreau School in South Dakota and the Haskell Institute in Kansas.
- Erdrich, Louise (Turtle Mountain Chippewa/German). Indian Boarding School: The Runaways. *Plains Native American Literature*. Multicultural Literature Collection. Virginia Seeley, ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Globe Book Company, 1993. 151 pp. ISBN: 0-8359-0535-7 (94-95)
- Education Section (69-86) in Hirschfelder, Arlene B. And Beverly R. Singer, eds. *Rising Voices: Writings of Young Native Americans*. New York: Scribner, 1992. **Summary:** 3-page introduction about the background of Traditional Native Education and government boarding schools; letters about personal boarding school experiences; poems; student testimony published in 1969 from a Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education A National Tragedy, A National Challenge.
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- Gertrude Bonnin (Zitkala Sa). *Native North American Literature*. New York: Gale Publishing, 1994. 169-176.
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## Appendix A

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[Susag, Dorothea. "Trickster/Transformer Figure." *Roots and Branches*. (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 trickster/transformer, or hero and antihero and in Western-European terms, can take on the forms of animals and humans, depending on the particular tribal tradition. To the Sioux/Lakota, he is ***Iktomi***, the spider; To the Nakota/Assiniboine, he is ***Inktomi***; To the Salish, he is ***Coyote***; To the Crow, he is ***Old Man Coyote***; To the Northwest, he is ***Raven***; To the Blackfeet, he is ***Old Man*** and ***Napi***; To the Abenaki, he is ***Gluscabi***; To the Crees in Montana and Canada, he is ***Wisahkecahk***; To the Cheyenne, he is ***VeHo***; and to the Gros Ventres, he is ***Nee Ot***.

Representing a wide range of possible human actions, the trickster is capable of much good, while he or she also may exhibit 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 on 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 they also learn to recognize their own deceitful and fraudulent behaviors.

Listeners may also learn 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.

Brigit Hans, in her Introduction to *The Hawk is Hungry and Other Stories* by 20th-century writer D'Arcy McNickle, 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 are 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 or your students listen to a story, put yourselves into the story. However, you must respect Tony Incashola's 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.

Tony Incashola (Salish) Culture Committee

## Appendix B

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[Susag, Dorothea. A revision of "The Yankton Reservation: 1858-1902" in *Roots and Branches*. (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 (1974-1902)* (A Portion of the Historical and Geographical Context)**

by  
Dorothea M. Susag

An important aspect of Zitkala-Ša's heritage which informs her writing of *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 1800's, 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 De Smet, this contact resulted 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 United States Government. In 1850 the Yankton band still claimed 13.5 million acres from the upper Des Moines to the upper Missouri River valleys. But when more traders and settlers migrated to this area and "squatted," pressuring the U. S. 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 thirty 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 towards 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." 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 that 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 that 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, and so they blamed the land, the neighboring whites, and they blamed the Indians. Even as

the agents claimed progress towards 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.

1876, the year of Gertrude 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. However, in 1900, Agent John W. Harding recommended ceasing of funding to St. Paul's because Ait [was] more sympathetic with Indians in conflict with Government policies. An agent in 1880 offered the most praise for Carlisle, an off-the-reservation school in Pennsylvania, where Zitkala-Ša would teach and write her essays that ultimately criticized the policies and practices of Carlisle.

However, by 1887 and continuing into the next century, agents rejected this same school in favor of the reservation 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 then 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 reporting school superintendents complained about poor average attendance and parents who didn't 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 Struck-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." In essence, 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 tepees, 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 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 twenty-one children died before the end of the school year, and in 1901 ninety-five 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 --8/1000, and among the Indians--24/1000. 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*, January, February, and March,

1900.

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## Appendix C

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### Books about Boarding Schools that can Inspire Students' Further Reading

#### Novels and Non-Fiction Chapter Books:

- Carvell, Marlene. ***Sweetgrass Basket***. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2005. 243 pages. ISBN: 0-525-47547-8

**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.

- Littlefield, Holly. ***Children of the Indian Boarding Schools***. Picture the American Past Series. First Avenue Editions: an imprint of Lerner Publishing Group. Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 2001. 46 pp. ISBN 0-8225-0088-4

**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 time line.

- Loyie, Larry (**Cree**) with Constance Brissenden. ***As Long as the Rivers Flow***. Illustrated by Heather D. Holmlund. Toronto: A Groundwood Book, 2002. 40 pages ISBN 0-88899-473-7

**Summary:** In June of 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, stories and ceremonies and gained the skills needed to survive, as well as the values, language and history that enabled him to pass on their heritage.

- Medicine Crow, Joseph (**Crow**). ***Counting Coup: Becoming a Crow Chief on the Reservation and Beyond***. Washington D.C.: National Geographic, 2006. 128 pp. ISBN: 0-7922-5391-4

**Summary:** Having accomplished all four Coups, Joe Medicine Crow is declared a full-fledged Crow war chief, the last traditional chief of the Crows. Traditional education (14-16); Baptist School (45-47); Public School (67-74); Boarding School (95-100).

- Pilkington, Doris *Nugi Garimara*. ***Rabbit-Proof Fence***. New York: Hyperion Miramax Books. ISBN 0-7868-8784-2 134 pp.

**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 and assimilated, and trained to work for whites in a school miles from their home.

- Riley, Patricia (**Cherokee**) ed. ***Growing Up Native American: An Anthology***. New York: Wm. Morrow, 1993. 333 pp. ISBN: 0-688-11850-X (*Roots and Branches* 131-132) Schooldays Section, with excerpts from LaFlesche, Lame Deer, Erdrich, Basil Johnston. pp. 115 - 188.
- Sterling, Shirley (**Interior Salish**). ***My Name is Seepeetza***. Vancouver BC: Groundwood Press, 1992. 126 pages. ISBN: 0-88899-165-7 (*Roots and Branches* 181)

**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.

- Trout, Lawana. *Native American Literature: An Anthology*. Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing, 1998. 777 pp. (With teachers guide) ISBN: 0-8442-5985-3

**Summary:** Chapter 8, Language and Learning in Two Worlds, with excerpts by Albert White Hat, Sr., Luther Standing Bear, Zitkala-Ša , Louise Erdrich, Sherman Alexie, Nora Dauenhauer, Larry Evers and Felipe S. Molina, N. Scott Momaday. pp 587 - 650.