

MASS MoCA

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Wendy Red Star
Apsáalooke: Children
of the Large-Beaked Bird

KIDSPACE

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This Educator Guide is intended to support K-12 art teachers in bringing *Wendy Red Star: Apsáalooke: Children of the Large-Beaked Bird* into the (virtual) classroom. These resources are designed to support students' visual and socio-emotional literacy, using Red Star's artistic practice and current exhibition in MASS MoCA's Kidspace to explore questions of family history, make connections across time and cultures, and promote social justice through sharing stories and perspectives.

The resources in this guide and the accompanying Tour Slideshows are meant to be **flexible and adaptable** to each classroom's needs. We encourage art teachers to collaborate with classroom or other teachers to extend the experiences through adapting one or more of the Curricular Connections activities for your students.

The outline below provides a loose structure for implementing these resources.

1. Review the "Quick Facts" with your class.
[15-20 min]
2. Complete the Tour Slideshow, all together or assign to individual students. The Slideshow is designed to be customizable: cut and rearrange slides to your liking! [Timing is flexible]
5. Choose one or more of the Curricular Connections activities below to complete. (Team up with a classroom teacher on this part!)
6. Complete a quick survey based on your experience so MASS MoCA can improve its distance learning resources. [10-15 min]

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

All of these Essential Questions have as their foundation a dual focus on socio-emotional learning and artistic intent, to address the following overarching question: What is Wendy Red Star trying to communicate with her work, and what are my own thoughts and feelings about that?



What can I learn about art, U.S. history, or other people when I look closely, or from another point of view?



What is “kinship”? How do you build kinship, and how does your family or culture play a part?



How can art help us learn about and advocate for Indigenous peoples whom colonizers tried to ignore or make disappear from the historical record?



How does art help us find common ground with one another, and celebrate our differences?

QUICK FACTS



Wendy Red Star, *Apsáalooke Feminist #2*, 2016

Who is Wendy Red Star?

Wendy Red Star is an artist and member of the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation. In her work, which includes photography and other mediums, she offers a narrative of Apsáalooke people in America that centers on an Indigenous perspective, in contrast to the typical stories told in popular culture and in histories told by non-Native scholars. In her practice, Red Star uses research as a tool to explore and understand — and then share — Apsáalooke history and culture, combining these explorations with humor and personal anecdotes and connections.

Or, more officially:

Artist Wendy Red Star works across disciplines to explore the intersections of Native American ideologies, both historically and in contemporary society. Raised on the Apsáalooke (Crow) reservation in Montana, Red Star's work is informed both by her heritage and her many forms of creative expression, including photography, sculpture, video, fiber arts, and performance. An avid researcher of archives and historical narratives, Red Star seeks to incorporate and recast her research, offering new and unexpected perspectives in work that is at once inquisitive, witty and

unsettling. Intergenerational collaborative work is integral to her practice. She also wants to create a wider forum for the expression of Native women's voices in contemporary art.

Red Star has exhibited in the United States and abroad at venues including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Domaine de Kerguéhennec, Portland Art Museum, Hood Art Museum, St. Louis Art Museum, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art, among others. She served as a visiting lecturer at institutions including Yale University, the Figge Art Museum, the Banff Centre, National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Dartmouth College, CalArts, Flagler College, and I.D.E.A. Space in Colorado Springs. In 2017, Red Star was awarded the Louis Comfort Tiffany Award, and in 2018 she received a Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship. In 2019 she had her first career survey exhibition at the Newark Museum in Newark, New Jersey. Red Star holds a BFA from Montana State University, Bozeman, and an MFA in sculpture from the University of California, Los Angeles. She lives and works in Portland, Oregon.

What is the Apsáalooke (Crow) Nation?

The Apsáalooke people are an Indigenous nation of North America, part of the Plains tribes who historically lived in the Yellowstone River valley. Their reservation is located in south central Montana, and there are about 10,000 enrolled tribal members today (about 75% of whom currently live on or near the reservation). The word Apsáalooke



[Image Source](#)

means “Children of the Large-Beaked Bird,” which European settlers mistranslated to “Crow” — a name that stuck, and today they are often referred to as the Crow Nation. For more information about the Apsáalooke people, check out the [Related Resources](#) section.

What is a Crow Delegation?

In 1873, 1880, and the early 1900s, leaders from the Crow Nation met with U.S. officials in Washington, D.C. to negotiate territory and land boundaries. The U.S. government wanted to build the Pacific Railroad through the Crow Reservation, so they wanted control of more land. Ever since Europeans arrived in the Americas, Indigenous peoples had to fight to preserve their land — sometimes through actual warfare, and other times through diplomacy. Apsáalooke leaders continued to go to D.C. in hopes that each trip would lead to greater recognition by the U.S. government, but the U.S. government continued to take advantage of the leaders and used techniques of intimidation by showing the Crow leaders their military, or delaying the talks so that the Crow leaders were stuck in D.C. long enough to become homesick. Over the course of the treaties signed with the U.S. government, including those signed on delegation trips, Crow land decreased from its 1851 size of 38 million acres to its current size of 2.3 million acres¹ — a decrease of 93.95%.

¹ For more information, see the [Crow Reservation Timeline](#) from the Indian Education Division of the Montana Office of Public Instruction, also listed in the Related Resources.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS



What can I learn about art, U.S. history, or other people when I look closely, or from another point of view?

View from the Shore / View from the Boat

Student Learning Objectives:

- ✓ Students will gain awareness of the dominant voices that are telling the histories of different cultures and will further consider storyteller biases.
- ✓ Students will use the “View from the Shore / View from the Boat” lens to analyze the educational resources and information they encounter on a daily basis.



CLOSE LOOKING ACTIVITY

D1.4.9-12; D2.Civ.14.9-12; D2.His.4.9-12; D2.His.6.9-12
VA:Pr6.1.IIa; VA:Re.7.1.5a; VA:Re.7.2.3a-6a; VA:Re8.1.3a-IIa
CASEL: Social Awareness

The Upstander Project (see [Related Resources](#)) uses the analogy of the “**View from the Shore / View from the Boat**” as a useful frame for teaching the history of Turtle Island — or what is now called North America.

Spend some time with your students exploring what these two perspectives mean. Who is looking from the shore? Who is looking from the boat? What effect does that have on what each group is seeing?

Use these two paintings as examples to illustrate these viewpoints. The Project Zero “[Step In - Step Out - Step Back](#)” Thinking Routine is a useful tool to help frame the class discussion. Divide the students into groups of 2–3, and assign them one of the paintings to look at. Then have them go through the following steps:

- 1. Choose** Identify a person or agent in the painting.
- 2. Step In** Given what you see and know at this time, what do you think this person might feel, believe, know, or experience?
- 3. Step Out** What else would you like or need to learn to understand this person’s perspective better?
- 4. Step Back** Given your exploration of this perspective so far, what do you notice about your own perspective and what it takes to take somebody else’s?



Nicole Jean-Louis, *Haiti 1492 Before Christopher Columbus*, oil on canvas (2012)
[Image source](#)



Emanuel Leutze, *The Departure of Columbus from Palos*, oil on canvas (1855)
[Image source](#)



CLOSE READING: TEXTBOOKS

MA HSS.3.T1.02, HSS.3.T2.01, HSS.3.T2.02, HSS.4.T4a.05
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6; CCSS.
ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8
CASEL: Social Awareness

Have your students analyze their **U.S. history textbooks**. What do the textbooks say — if anything — about Indigenous Americans? Which “view” is the story of European contact with American Indians told from? How can they tell? According to the National Museum of the American Indian, 87% of state history standards do not mention Native American history after the year 1900, and 27 states make no mention at all of a single Native American in their whole K–12 curriculum.² What are the consequences of these omissions?

Encourage your students to identify textbook authors, whether the textbooks discuss specific Native tribes, and at what point textbooks stop telling Native history. Can they find any accounts of these moments of American history that are told from the point of view of “the shore”? (A couple of recommendations for YA readers include Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz’s [An Indigenous People’s History of the United States for Young People](#) (2019) and Howard Zinn’s [A Young People’s History of the United States](#) (2009).

One resource to help set the stage is Teaching Tolerance’s [“Reading Against the Grain”](#) lesson plan (Grades 6–12). This activity encourages students to analyze the dominant narrative in a text and engage in “resistant readings” to explore the values and prejudices within a text that are not always explicitly stated.

2 [Teaching Tolerance & National Museum of the American Indian webinar](#)



CLOSE LOOKING: GEOGRAPHY

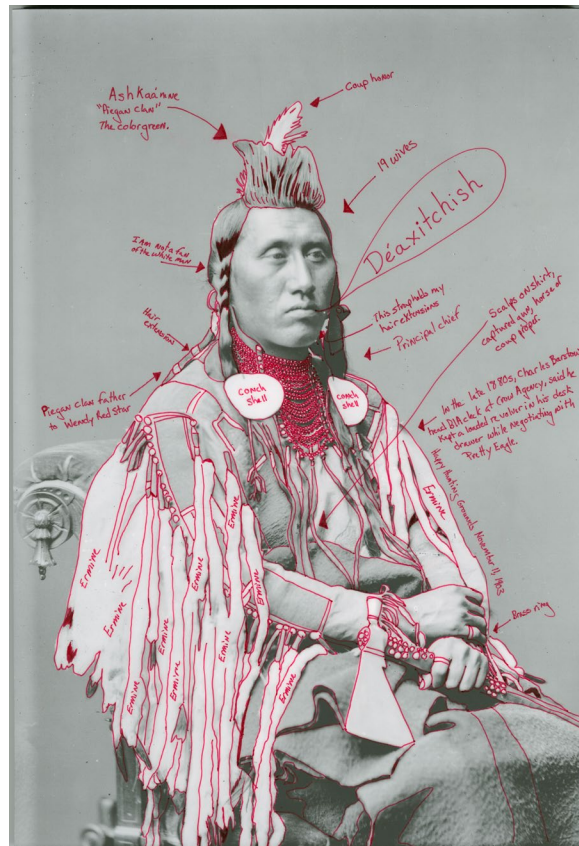
HSS.3.T1.02, HSS.3.T2.01, HSS.3.T2.02, HSS.3.T3.01, HSS.3.T3.03, HSS.4.T2.02, HSS.4.T4a.05, HSS.4.T4b.02, HSS.4.T4c.02, HSS.4.T4d.03, HSS.4.T4d.05, HSS.4.T4e.03, HSS.5.T1.01, HSS.5.T4.05, HSS. USI.T6.05
D2.Geo.7.9-12
CASEL: Social Awareness

Students can reframe **geography** lessons with the “View from the Shore / View from the Boat” as well. [The Decolonial Atlas](#) is an ongoing project to “help us to challenge our relationships with the land, people, and state.” Have students explore the map of [Northeast Turtle Island in Mohawk](#). What places do they recognize? If students live in Northeast Turtle Island, can they find where their hometowns are located? How does this activity change their perspective on where they live? Have your class research the Indigenous history of your area, and create a new map together. The [Native Land website](#) and the “[Whose Land](#)” project can be great resources to get students started; this research is detailed more thoroughly in [Curriculum Connection: How can art help us notice, claim, and share things that have been erased or destroyed?](#)

Annotated Portraits

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Students will understand that photography can be a tool to present an edited or incomplete story of a person or culture.
- ✓ Students will explore the ways that annotation can be used as a tool to regain control of what story gets told.
- ✓ Students will reflect on what their own clothing, accessories, and hairstyles express and reveal about who they are.
- ✓ Students will use the “View from the Shore / View from the Boat” lens to analyze the educational resources and information they encounter on a daily basis.



Wendy Red Star, *Déaxitchish/Pretty Eagle*, 2014

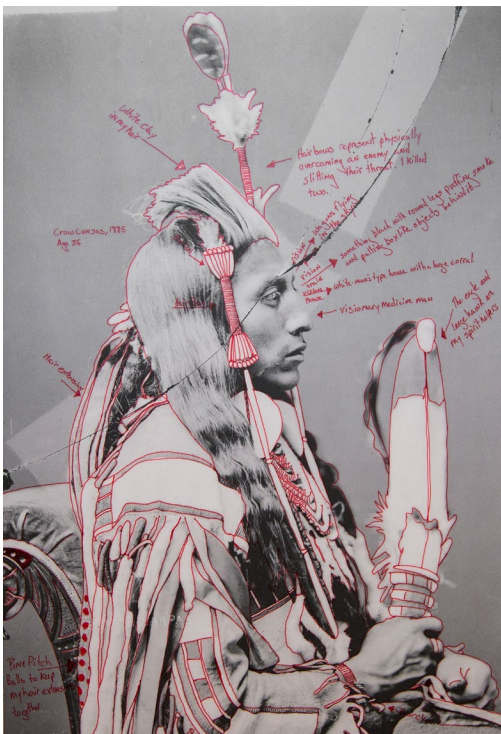


CLOSE LOOKING ACTIVITY

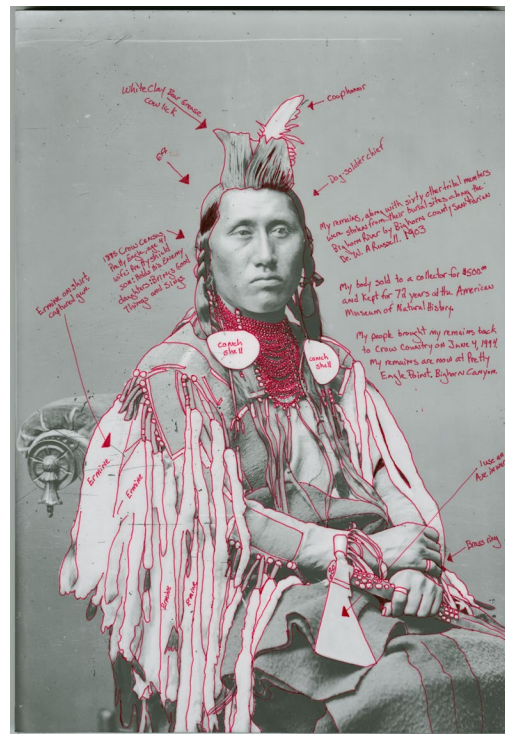
Wendy Red Star’s annotated portraits are an example of reframing history from the “view from the shore.” These portraits, which were taken by U.S. government photographers, document the Apsáalooke leaders who took part in the historic 1880 Crow Delegation to negotiate with U.S. officials for land rights. (The Zinn Education Project has a teaching guide on [“Indian Removal”](#) that can serve as a foundation for discussing the land negotiations with your students.)

Using a red pen to add text and definition to archival images, Red Star draws attention to the individuality of each Crow leader — which goes directly against the intended purpose of the original 1880 photographs, which were taken to showcase a “type.” In other words, these photographs were supposed to represent an oversimplified idea of a Crow leader, rather than a portrait of an individual person. These kinds of anthropological “types” fail to take into consideration the diversity and individuality of Crow leaders (and, by extension, Crow people in general), and contribute to misunderstandings about and dehumanization of people of color.

A review in [The New York Times](#) describes Red Star's process: "Using handwritten notes and arrows, [Red Star] points out Crow accoutrements and hairstyles, explains the origins of customs and names various figures, whether a tribal chief or her aunt."



Wendy Red Star, *Peelatchiwaaxpáash/Medicine Crow (Raven)*, 2014



Wendy Red Star, *Déaxitchish/Pretty Eagle*, 2014

The tone is both educational (“This is an elk tooth dress”) and confessional (“The most awkward teenage photo ...”), as if we were reading her private research notes. Ms. Red Star turns public history into a personal project, which she then returns to public view. In the process she drives home the timeless lesson that matters of government policy are also matters of people’s lives.” Students can listen to Red Star describe her process in more detail in the Tour Slideshow.

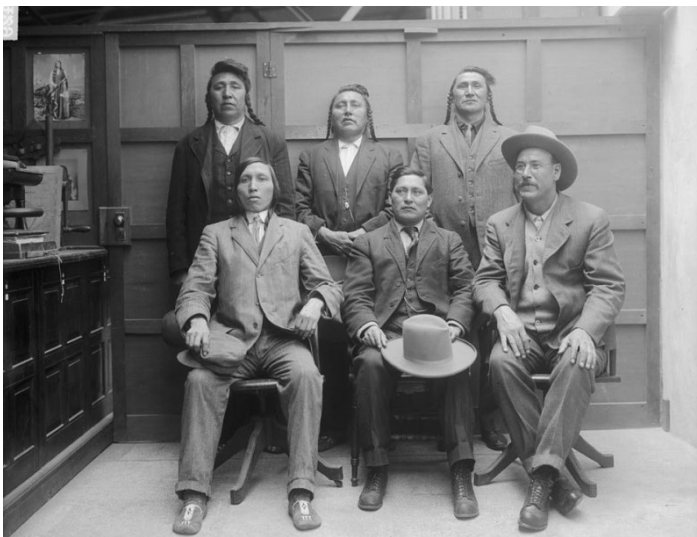
Using the “View from the Shore / View from the Boat” framework, **compare** Red Star’s annotated versions with unannotated group portraits of the leaders, copied below (and also available in the Tour Slideshow). What questions do students have about these works? How might they go about engaging in a research process to discover more information about these individuals and the context for these photographs?



In Washington D.C. original photograph by the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Ethnology (National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History)

Crow leaders in traditional clothing

Left to right: Holds His Enemy, Spotted Rabbit, Sees With His Ears, White Man Runs Him, Packs the Hat



Crow leaders in Western-style clothing

Left to right, top to bottom: Stops, Sees With His Ears, Holds The Enemy, ?, James Hill, ?



ART-MAKING

D1.4.9-12; D2.Civ.6.9-12; D2.His.4.9-12; D2.His.6.9-12; D2.His.11.9-12; D2.His.12.9-12
VA:Cr3.1.3a; VA:Cr3.1.6a; VA:Pr6.1.3a-1a; VA:Pr6.1.1a; VA:Re.7.1.3a-1a; VA:Re.7.2.3a-6a; VA:Cn11.1.5a;
VA:Cn11.1.8a; VA:Cn11.1.1a
CASEL: Social Awareness, Self-Awareness, Relationship Skills

Ask your students to create their own annotated portraits as a way of exploring what it means to control your own representation. Ask them to select a photo of themselves that was taken by someone else. Ideally, this could be a school portrait or a photo taken in another “official” setting. Ask students to compare these portraits to the official portraits of the Crow Delegation: what is similar? What is different? Have them consider questions of aesthetics (what the portraits look like: 3/4 view? headshots or full-length?) as well as intention (who was taking the photo and why?).

As a final step, have your students annotate their own portraits of themselves or of a close friend or family member. Students can print the pictures and use red pens, like Wendy Red Star does, or they can annotate digitally — Markup is a simple annotation tool available on most iPhones, for example. What information do they want viewers to know about themselves that is not clear right away from just looking? Add information about what the person is wearing, their personality, or a memory you have of that person or an accessory.

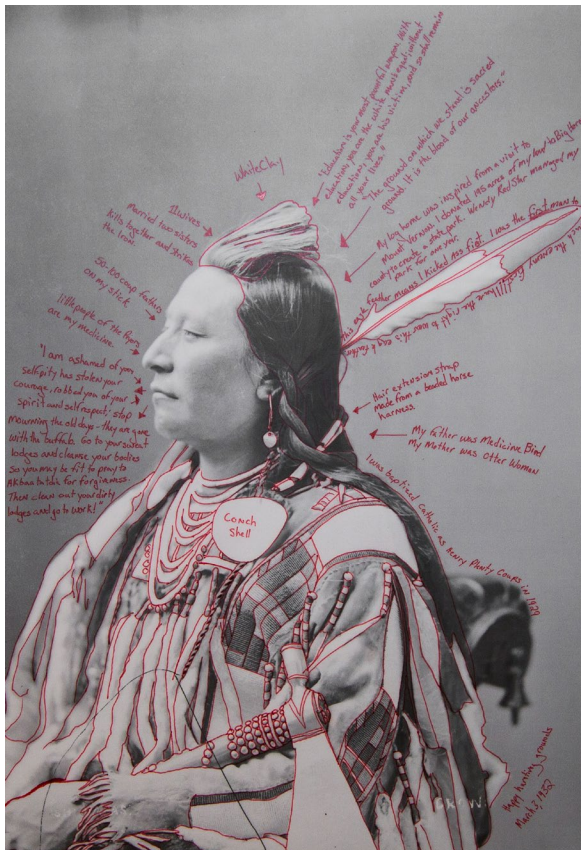


Crow Delegation, 1873



HSS.4.T4e.03; HSS.5.T4.05; HSS.USI.T6.05.
D2.Civ.1.9-12; D2.Civ.14.9-12; D2.His.12.9-12; D2.His.14.9-12
VA:Re.7.2.3a-6a; VA:Re.7.2.1a-IIa; VA:Cn11.1.5a
CASEL: Social Awareness

In her annotated portrait of Chief Alaxchiihahush/Many War Achievements/Plenty Coups, Wendy Red Star points out that he is shown wearing an eagle feather, which functions as a symbol of leadership, courage, and strength. In the Tour Slideshow, she also tells the story of [Chief Plenty Coups State Park](#). This [classroom activity](#) from the Montana Office of Public Instruction introduces students to Plenty Coups, and to the Apsáalooke traditions and values around leadership. Have students complete the activities in this lesson, and then follow up with a discussion of leadership. What other symbols of leadership can they think of? Have them look at portraits of contemporary world leaders and consider the following questions: what symbols of leadership can they identify in those images? What leadership values might those symbols communicate?



Wendy Red Star, *Peelatchiwaaxpáash/Medicine Crow (Raven)*, 2014

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS



**What is “kinship”?
How do you build
kinship, and how does
your family or culture
play a part?**

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Students will explore the concept of “kinship” as referring to a community larger than nuclear families in their own lives.
- ✓ Students will identify different individuals in their lives who constitute their kin and the different ways these individuals have taught and shaped them.
- ✓ Students will examine how their own family history and values can provide an increased sense of ownership over their identity.
- ✓ Students will demonstrate their understanding of basic fractions through color proportions.

In *Apsáalooke Feminist*, Wendy Red Star poses with her daughter, Beatrice, in a portrait that emphasizes how traditions are passed down from one generation to the next in the Crow culture. Red Star uses this title because the Apsáalooke people traditionally had a matrilineal system, and colonization imposed a patriarchal system onto them. (One example of how this happened was that the U.S. government divided up land among Native men, even in societies that had women leaders.)³

Through her art-making practice, Red Star conducts research into her family history and cultural heritage. In the Tour Slideshow, she tells the story of when she was tracing her genealogy on Ancestry.com, she realized that the idea of “family” as defined by Ancestry.com was much more limited than the way Apsáalooke people conceive of family. Instead, **kinship** plays a more important role in Crow traditions.



Wendy Red Star, *Apsáalooke Feminist* #2, 2016



RESEARCH ACTIVITY: KINSHIP TREE

HSS.4.T4e.03; HSS.5.T4.05; HSS.USI.T6.05.
D2.Civ.1.9-12; D2.Civ.14.9-12; D2.His.12.9-12; D2.His.14.9-12
VA:Re.7.2.3a-6a; VA:Re.7.2.1a-IIa; VA:Cn11.1.5a
CASEL: Social Awareness

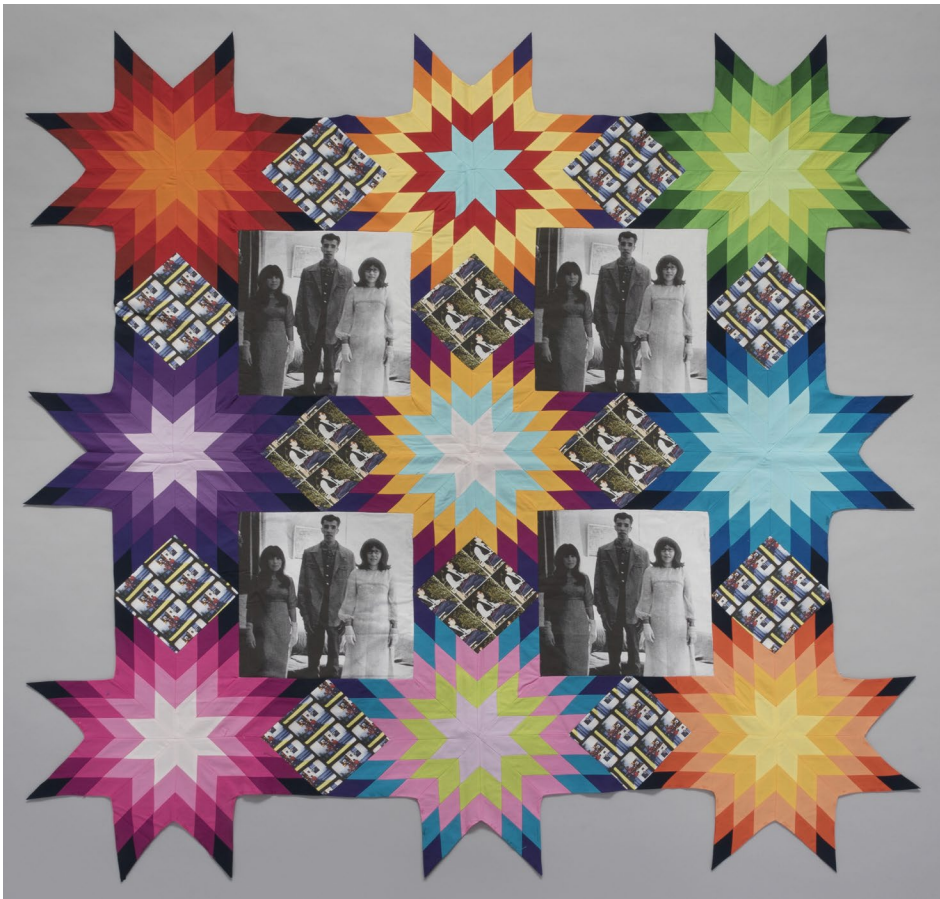
Have your students explore the idea of kinship in Apsáalooke culture through the [Native 360 site](#). Then, ask your students to create a Kinship Tree. Family trees typically have people trace their biological roots from parent to grandparent to great-grandparent, and so on. In this **Kinship Tree**, ask students to instead think about their values, and the people who taught them their values — whether or not they are biologically related. This might include teachers, friends, community members, even celebrities or book characters that students look up to. Who are the ancestors and cousins who have helped shape who they are today? Who are the people who helped them feel connected and hopeful during quarantine?

Start by listing the individuals who would go on the Kinship Tree. Then, as a group or individually, ask students to brainstorm the best way to visualize these relationships. What is the best way to visualize the connections? Is it linear, as in traditional family trees, or something less defined (a spiral, a circle, etc.)? Is it two-dimensional or three-dimensional?



ART-MAKING ACTIVITY: KINSHIP QUILTS

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3.B; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3.D;
CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.A; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.B; CCSS.MATH.
CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.C; CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.D
VA:Cr1.2.3a-IIIa; VA:Cr3.1.3a; VA:Cr3.1.6a; VA:Pr6.1.3a; VA:Re.7.1.6a; VA:Cn10.1.4a; VA:Cn11.1.1a
CASEL: Social Awareness, Self-Awareness, Relationship Skills

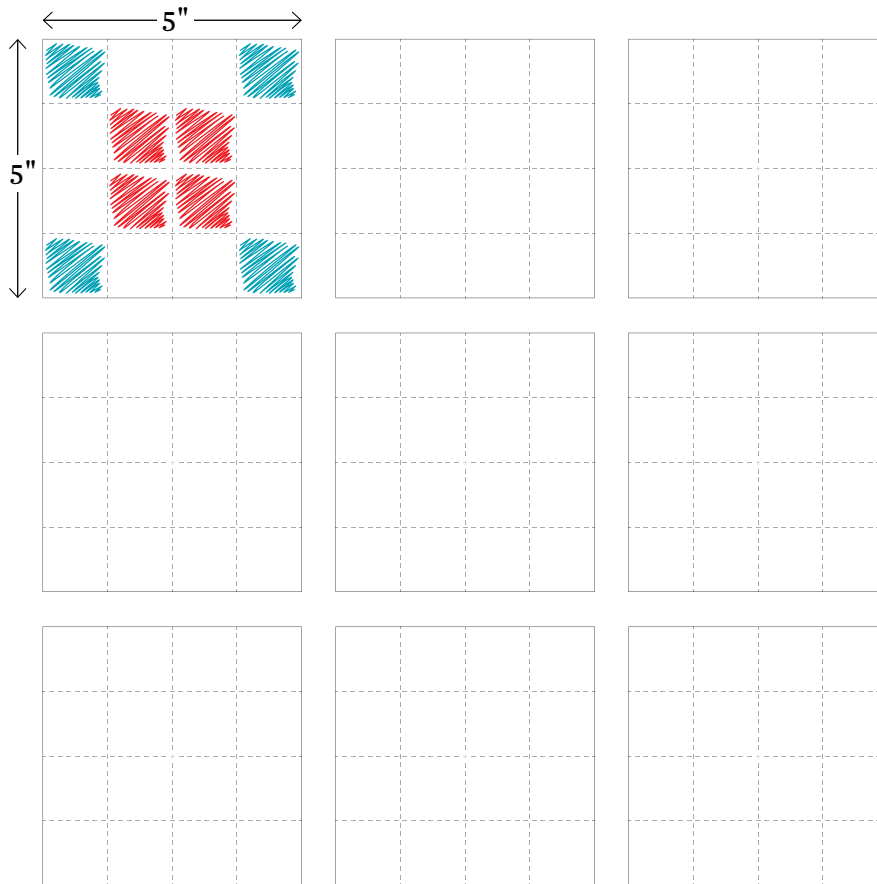


Wendy Red Star, *Family Portraits - Two Prom Dates*, 2011

Wendy Red Star creates photo-collaged quilts depicting members of her family. Students may use the [downloadable template](#) to create their own Kinship Quilt by printing the template provided and collaging. Alternatively, team up with a classroom teacher on a math extension, in which students create their own quilts to explore fractions and patterns:

1. Provide students with 9 square pieces of white paper, each about 5"x5". These pieces will become quilt squares to intersperse with photos or drawings of students' kin (like the quilted stars in Red Star's version).

2. Have students use pencils and a ruler to divide their squares into sixteen squares. Each small square should be about 1.25"x1.25".
3. Provide students with different prompts to visualize and compare fractions — e.g., color in $\frac{1}{4}$ of the grid blue, and $\frac{4}{16}$ red. Work with the math teacher at your school to develop prompts that align with what students are learning in the classroom.



Once students have 9 colored quilt patterns, have them collage the pieces with family photos or drawings of specific family members. Encourage them to think about the people who taught them their values, whether or not these people are biologically related to them. (See the Kinship Tree activity above.) Students can make multiple copies of the same photograph/drawing, as Red Star does, or they can include different images in the gaps between the colored quilt squares. Similarly, they can arrange the photos and quilted squares in a large grid, or they can get more creative and design their own finished shape.

Finally, have students reflect on the concept of a quilt. What are quilts for? In what ways do the people who make up their kin act as a kind of quilt?

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS



How can art help us learn about and advocate for Indigenous peoples whom colonizers tried to ignore or make disappear from the historical record?

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Students will recognize the power of collaboration by including the voices of local Indigenous representatives when creating school land acknowledgement.
- ✓ Students will understand the methods that the U.S. Government has used to silence and erase hundreds of Indigenous cultures.

Beginning in the 19th century, Native peoples in the U.S. were subjected to different forced assimilation techniques that aimed to “Americanize” Indigenous peoples, or force them to adopt European American cultural norms. Many Indigenous children were sent to residential boarding schools, where children were severely punished for speaking their native languages and practicing other traditions. (For more background on this and the role of the child welfare system in forced assimilation, see the *Dawnland* documentary and related Teacher Guide in [Related Resources](#).) As a result of this forced erasure of Indigenous languages and cultures — which is considered cultural genocide — many Native languages are in danger of dying out. In *Apsáalooke: Children of the Large-Beaked Bird*, Wendy Red Star includes elements of the Apsáalooke language, which is currently only spoken by 3,000-4,000 tribal members. The Tour Slideshow introduces students to an [audio recording](#) of a conversation between Wendy Red Star and her father, Wallace Red Star, Jr., in which he reads the names of animals in Apsáalooke. The Stockbridge Munsee Mohican Nation — the Indigenous stewards of the land that MASS MoCA is on — is also in the process of reviving the Mohican language, using historical records because there were no living speakers of Mohican. Read more about these efforts and listen to Mohican yourself on their [website](#).



RESEARCH ACTIVITY: LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

HSS.3.T1.02; HSS.4.T4a.05; HSS.USII.T4.08.f.
D2.Civ.6.9-12; D2.Civ.14.9-12; D2.Geo.2.9-12; D2.Geo.6.9-12; D2.His.6.9-12
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.7
CASEL: Social Awareness, Relationship Skills

One way that activists, schools, organizations, and other individuals are working to combat erasure is through Land Acknowledgements, or statements that identify and honor the Indigenous culture(s) that inhabited the land where people are gathering, studying, or working today.

Have students create a land acknowledgement for your school. Heather Bruegl, the Director of Cultural Affairs for the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican Nation, identifies four critical components of writing a land acknowledgement:

1. Don't assume you already know whose land you are on: do your research! Check out the Related Resources to get started; one valuable resource is the [Native Land website](#), which has an interactive map where people can search by zip code. Encourage your students to notice the number of Indigenous peoples in each area, and remind them that each culture has distinct customs, languages, and traditions. Once your students have identified the local tribe(s), have them conduct research about that culture's traditions and history. Is there a reservation there where current members of the community live? If not (which is often the case in the Northeast), why not? Where are they now?
2. Reach out to tribal representatives from the nation(s) you want to acknowledge, for guidance and to make sure that your statement reflects the wishes of the tribe(s). The tribe may already have language written for individuals and organizations to use, or they may wish to be involved in crafting that language.
3. Make sure to acknowledge the contemporary, as well as the past. Where does the tribe live now? What name(s) do they use? This helps counteract the misrepresentation of Native peoples as being only part of the past when, in fact, they have vibrant, evolving cultures and communities today.
4. Include an action item or a goal in the statement. For example, the Stockbridge Munsee Mohican Nation land acknowledgement (copied in full [at the end of this guide](#)) includes a commitment towards building a "more inclusive and equitable space for all."

Once the land acknowledgement is written, ask your students to consider ways in which they can continue to recognize and honor the tribe: how will they display the statement? Will it be read aloud regularly at assemblies? Posted on the school website? What more can be done? Have students research which people(s) lived or live where they live.

CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS



How does art help us find common ground with one another, and celebrate our differences?

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- ✓ Students will recognize the harm behind using Native imagery in school or team mascots.
- ✓ Students will explore examples of successful activism to remove Native mascots.
- ✓ Students will articulate a cohesive argument with supporting evidence from the lesson.
- ✓ Students will apply their arguments to practice the democratic skill of conducting a letter-writing campaign.

In her artwork, Wendy Red Star draws attention to the ways in which Native people have been misrepresented — in museums, in the media, in pop culture, and beyond. *Indian Summer* is from her series *Four Seasons*, in which Red Star places herself in artificial, colorful dioramas. The elements of “nature” all around her are all fake — highlighting the ways that traditional dioramas of Native peoples in natural history museums are also misleading, in ways that are often damaging. The placement of Indigenous peoples in these dioramas (often right next to dioramas of natural environments and extinct animals including dinosaurs) contributes to pervasive ideas that Native Americans only exist in the past, or as part of the natural landscape. Red Star challenges these assumptions by providing images of Apsáalooke people today.



Wendy Red Star, *Indian Summer* - *Four Seasons*, 2006



PERSUASIVE WRITING ACTIVITY: MASCOTS & LOGOS CAMPAIGNS

HSS.3.T1.02, HSS.4.T4a.05; HSS.USII.T4.08.f.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.1.A-E; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.4; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.5; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.6; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.7; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1; CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
CASEL: Social Awareness, Relationship Skills

Many schools, companies, sports teams, and governments have used imagery in their logos or mascots that are offensive and harmful to Indigenous communities. In 2005, the American Psychological Association found that using American Indian mascots “undermines the educational experiences of members of all communities — especially those who have had little or no contact with indigenous peoples” and “establishes an unwelcome and oftentimes hostile learning environment for American Indian students.”⁴ Additional studies have found that mascots lead to decreased self-esteem among American Indian youth.⁵ The National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, further states that these mascots “reduce the 6.7 million American Indians living in the U.S. to a stereotype that can be exploited.”

But thanks to Indigenous activism and the shifting political landscape, this is changing more and more. In June 2020, Land O’Lakes butter removed the image of a stereotypical Native woman from its packaging. In July 2020, the Washington NFL team announced it would change its name from what is considered a racial slur against Native peoples, though they have not yet announced what their new name will be. (To hear more about the activism behind that change, check out this [podcast](#) featuring activist Tara Houska, Couchiching First Nation, and the [Not Your Mascots](#) campaign she co-founded). Activists in Massachusetts have [long campaigned](#) to change the Massachusetts state seal (which goes on official documents and on the state flag) — and just this summer reached a major achievement! The state senate [voted unanimously](#) to change the state seal in July 2020.

An older example from 1989 shows how activists don’t have to be adults to stand up for what’s right and make change happen. A 2nd grade class from Amherst, MA, wrote a letter campaign to the state government about the signs on the Massachusetts Turnpike. The original sign had a logo of a pilgrim’s hat being shot through by a bow and arrow, which communicated racist ideas about Indigenous people as war-like and dangerous, and was offensive to local Native communities. The 2nd graders spoke up about this, writing letters to the government until the state officially changed the logo to a simple pilgrim’s hat.

4 [Teaching Tolerance & National Museum of the American Indian webinar](#)

5 [PDF](#)



[Image source](#)



[Image source](#)
[Article](#)

Have students research and inventory their schools' and sports teams' mascots, or those of other schools that are in their area. Many schools in Massachusetts have announced plans to change their mascots ([Taconic High School](#) in Pittsfield, or the [Barnstable school district](#)), while [others](#) have decided to keep their mascots in spite of public pressure. Meanwhile, [state legislators](#) are trying to pass a bill to ban Native American mascots in public schools in Massachusetts. What are the reasons to change mascots? What reasons do people cite to keep them as they are? The [Anti-Racism Daily newsletter](#) has a post dedicated to activism around changing racist sports team names, which could be a great starting point for a class discussion.

Have your students conduct a letter-writing campaign to a school, team, or company that uses Native imagery in their logos or mascots. Start out with brainstorming as a group the different elements of persuasive writing, such as:

- A hook
- A thesis statement
- Evidence
- Discussion of counter-arguments
- A conclusion

Students will also need to identify a recipient of their letters: is it the school superintendent? A town's school committee? A letter to the editor of a local newspaper? The Massachusetts state government? (Note: There are three bills that the tribes of Massachusetts support in the State House right now that address banning offensive mascots from high schools and changing the state flag and seal to protect Native American heritage. This legislation is supported by the [Chappaquiddick Tribe of the Wampanoag Nation](#), the [Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe](#), the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe, the [Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag](#), and the [Nipmuc Nation](#). These efforts need additional support! Find out more at the [MA Indigenous Legislative Agenda website](#) — and [this form](#) will send letters directly to legislators.)

CURRICULAR STANDARDS

Activities in this Educator Guide and the Wendy Red Star Tour Slideshow support standards across various platforms: Common Core, C3, MA Curriculum Frameworks, National Core Arts Standards, CASEL, and Teaching Tolerance Social Justice Standards.* Additionally, the website [SEL/ARTS](#) provides a matrix for demonstrating the overlaps between the National Core Arts Standards.

MA CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

HSS.3.T1.02.	Research the demographic origins of the town or city (e.g., the Native People who originally lived there or still live there, the people who established it as a colonial town, its founding date, and the free, indentured, and enslaved women and men who contributed to the well-being of the town).
HSS.3.T2.01.	On a physical map of North America, use cardinal directions, map scales, legends, and titles to locate the Northeast region and identify important physical features.
HSS.3.T2.02.	Explain the diversity of Native Peoples, present and past, in Massachusetts and the New England region.
HSS.3.T3.01.	Locate North America, the Atlantic Ocean, and Europe on a map, explain how Native Peoples first came into contact with Europeans, and explain why Europeans in the 16th–17th centuries sailed westward across the Atlantic.
HSS.4.T4a.05.	Describe the diverse cultural nature of the region, including contributions of Native Peoples.
HSS.4.T4e.03.	Describe the diverse cultural nature of the western region of the United States, including contributions of Native Peoples.
HSS.5.T4.05.	Explain 19th-century conflicts between Native Peoples and national, state, and local governments in the United States over land ownership and rights to self-government.

- HSS.USI.T6.05.** Analyze the consequences of the continuing westward expansion of the American people after the Civil War and evaluate the impact of the 14th Amendment on Native Peoples and Asian and European immigrant men and women.
- HSS.USII.T4.08.f.** Using primary and secondary sources, analyze the causes and course of the following social and political movements, including consideration of the role of protest, advocacy organizations, and active citizen participation: the movement to protect the rights, self-determination, and sovereignty of Native Peoples (e.g., the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, the American Indian Movement, the Wounded Knee Incident at the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in 1973, the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975, and the efforts of Native Peoples' groups to preserve Native cultures, gain federal or state recognition, and raise awareness of Native American history.

C3 STANDARDS

[Website](#)

- D1.4.9-12.** Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how, through engaging source work, new compelling and supporting questions emerge.
- D2.Civ.1.9-12.** Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national, and international civic and political institutions.
- D2.Civ.6.9-12.** Critique relationships among governments, civil societies, and economic markets.
- D2.Civ.14.9-12.** Analyze historical, contemporary, and emerging means of changing societies, promoting the common good, and protecting rights.
- D2.Geo.2.9-12.** Use maps, satellite images, photographs, and other representations to explain relationships between the locations of places and regions and their political, cultural, and economic dynamics.

<i>D2.Geo.6.9-12.</i>	Evaluate the impact of human settlement activities on the environmental and cultural characteristics of specific places and regions.
<i>D2.Geo.7.9-12.</i>	Analyze the reciprocal nature of how historical events and the spatial diffusion of ideas, technologies, and cultural practices have influenced migration patterns and the distribution of human population.
<i>D2.His.4.9-12.</i>	Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
<i>D2.His.6.9-12.</i>	Analyze the ways in which the perspectives of those writing history shaped the history that they produced.
<i>D2.His.11.9-12.</i>	Critique the usefulness of historical sources for a specific historical inquiry based on their maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.
<i>D2.His.12.9-12.</i>	Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
<i>D2.His.14.9-12.</i>	Analyze multiple and complex causes and effects of events in the past.

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS: VISUAL ART

[Website](#)

<i>VA:Cr1.2.3a-IIIa</i>	Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the art-making process.
<i>VA:Cr3.1.3a</i>	Elaborate visual information by adding details in an artwork to enhance emerging meaning.
<i>VA:Cr3.1.6a</i>	Reflect on whether personal artwork conveys the intended meaning, and revise accordingly.
<i>VA:Pr5.1.4a</i>	Analyze the various considerations for presenting and protecting art in various locations, indoor or outdoor settings, in temporary or permanent forms, and in physical or digital formats.

VA:Pr6.1.3a-Ia	Identify and explain how and where different cultures record and illustrate stories and history of life through art.
VA:Pr6.1.IIa	Make, explain, and justify connections between artists or artwork and social, cultural, and political history.
VA:Re.7.1.3a-Ia	Speculate about processes that an artist uses to create a work of art.
VA:Re.7.2.3a-6a	Determine messages communicated by an image.
VA:Re.7.2.Ia-IIa	Analyze how one's understanding of the world is affected by experiencing visual imagery.
VA:Re8.1.3a-IIa	Interpret art by analyzing use of media to create subject matter, characteristics of form, and mood.
VA:Cn10.1.IIa	Utilize inquiry methods of observation, research, and experimentation to explore unfamiliar subjects through art-making.
VA:Cn11.1.5a	Identify how art is used to inform or change beliefs, values, or behaviors of an individual or society.
VA:Cn11.1.6a	Analyze how art reflects changing times, traditions, resources, and cultural uses.
VA:Cn11.1.8a	Distinguish different ways that art is used to represent, establish, reinforce, and reflect group identity.
VA:Cn11.1.Ia	Describe how knowledge of culture, traditions, and history may influence personal responses to art.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

[Website](#)

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3

Explain equivalence of fractions in special cases, and compare fractions by reasoning about their size.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3.B

Recognize and generate simple equivalent fractions, e.g., $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{4}{6} = \frac{2}{3}$.

Explain why the fractions are equivalent, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.3.NF.A.3.D

Compare two fractions with the same numerator or the same denominator by reasoning about their size. Recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two fractions refer to the same whole. Record the results of comparisons with the symbols $>$, $=$, or $<$, and justify the conclusions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.A

Understand addition and subtraction of fractions as joining and separating parts referring to the same whole.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.B

Decompose a fraction into a sum of fractions with the same denominator in more than one way, recording each decomposition by an equation. Justify decompositions, e.g., by using a visual fraction model.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.C

Add and subtract mixed numbers with like denominators, e.g., by replacing each mixed number with an equivalent fraction, and/or by using properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.4.NF.B.3.D

Solve word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions referring to the same whole and having like denominators, e.g., by using visual fraction models and equations to represent the problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.1.A-E

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.4

With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.5

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.6

With guidance and support from adults, use technology to produce and publish writing (using keyboarding skills) as well as to interact and collaborate with others.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3-8.7

Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

CASEL FRAMEWORK

[Website](#)

Self-Awareness:	The ability to understand one's own emotions, thoughts, and values and how they influence behavior across contexts.
Social Awareness:	The ability to understand the perspectives of and empathize with others, including those from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and contexts.
Relationship Skills:	The ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups.

TEACHING TOLERANCE SOCIAL JUSTICE STANDARDS

[Website](#)

*Teaching Tolerance has designed Social Justice Standards for classroom teaching. Wendy Red Star's Kidspace exhibition and these resources explicitly support the Social Justice Standards that are copied below. We encourage you to review the whole list of standards available in the link, and apply them to your own existing curricula. In what ways do your existing lesson plans — on Indigenous cultures or in other areas — support these standards? How might adopting these standards further your own teaching goals?

Identity

3. Students will recognize that people's multiple identities interact and create unique and complex individuals.
5. Students will recognize traits of the dominant culture, their home culture, and other cultures and understand how they negotiate their own identity in multiple spaces.

Diversity

6. Students will express comfort with people who are both similar to and different from them and engage respectfully with all people.
7. Students will develop language and knowledge to accurately and respectfully describe how people (including themselves) are both similar to and different from each other and others in their identity groups.
8. Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.
9. Students will respond to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding, and connection.
10. Students will examine diversity in social, cultural, political, and historical contexts rather than in ways that are superficial or oversimplified.

Justice

11. Students will recognize stereotypes and relate to people as individuals rather than representatives of groups.
12. Students will recognize unfairness on the individual level (e.g., biased speech) and injustice at the institutional or systemic level (e.g., discrimination).
13. Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.
15. Students will identify figures, groups, events, and a variety of strategies and philosophies relevant to the history of social justice around the world.

Action

17. Students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice, and injustice.
20. Students will plan and carry out collective action against bias and injustice in the world and will evaluate what strategies are most effective.

GLOSSARY

<i>Apsáalooke</i>	“Children of the Large-Beaked Bird,” a Native American tribe also known as the Crow tribe, a name that came from European settlers who misinterpreted the word “Apsáalooke” to mean “Crow”
<i>Archive</i>	A collection of information, particularly public records and/or historical documents; the records and documents themselves
<i>Continuance</i>	The quality of enduring, or permanence
<i>Cultural Genocide</i>	Acts and measures undertaken to destroy nations’ or ethnic groups’ culture through spiritual, national, and cultural destruction, as defined by the Armenian Genocide Museum
<i>Delegation</i>	A group of persons chosen to represent others
<i>Diorama</i>	A scenic representation in which sculptured figures and lifelike details are displayed, often in miniature or life-sized
<i>Ethnology</i>	A branch of anthropology dealing chiefly with the comparative and analytical study of cultures. In the time the Crow Delegation Portraits were taken (late 19th/early 20th centuries), ethnology would have referred to what was then considered a “science,” dealing with the division of human beings into races and their origin, distribution, relations, and characteristics (this kind of racial classification is one of the motivations the U.S. Government had for commissioning these portraits: to represent “the” Crow person). Over the course of the 20th century the idea that there is a scientific basis for race had been discredited.
<i>Indigenous</i>	Produced, growing, living, or occurring natively or naturally in a particular region or environment. When applied to people, this term means belonging to a specific place, and in the United States it is often used interchangeably with the term “Native,” “Native American,” and “American Indian.” The Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian has a resource for exploring the

differences between these terms, as well as some general notes about the importance of language. This document can serve as a great foundation for teaching lessons about Indigenous history and/or peoples.

Kinship

The quality or state of being in relationship to others; synonyms include affinity, connection, and association.

Narrative

[Illuminative](#) describes narrative as the broadly accepted story that reinforces ideas, norms, issues, and expectations in society. It is created by stories passed along between family and friends, by the news media, by entertainment and pop culture, by education and public art, and by policies and much more. It often reinforces stereotypes and the status quo and allows oppressive systems and norms to stay in place.

Dominant Narrative

Dominant narrative is the lens through which history is told from the perspective of the dominant culture.

Narrative Change

Narrative change is an intentional effort to replace an existing narrative with something new. It is a powerful contributor to social change. Narrative change can lead to shifts in attitudes, behaviors, practices and policies — and can lead to deeper and lasting changes in systems and cultures.

Reservation

Has many definitions, but in this context, it refers to the public land set aside for use by American Indians.

All definitions are adapted from Merriam-Webster unless otherwise noted.

RELATED RESOURCES

On Wendy Red Star

- [Interview with Wendy Red Star](#) about her Kidspace exhibition, *Apsáalooke: Children of the Large-Beaked Bird in Hyperallergic* (8/6/2020):
- [2017: The Year According to Wendy Red Star](#) (including a closer look at the history of how Pretty Eagle's remains were repatriated to the Crow Nation)
- [Wendy Red Star in conversation with poet Natalie Diaz](#) on Wendy's curated issue of *Aperture* magazine (10/6/20)
- [Wendy Red Star spotlight](#) in the [Native American Art Teacher Resources](#) from the Hood Museum of Art

On the Apsáalooke Tribe

- The official [Crow Nation](#) website
- [“Is a Treaty Intended to Be Forever?”](#) Native Knowledge 360 lesson for Grades 9–12
- [“How Do Native People and Nations Experience Belonging?”](#) Native Knowledge 360 lesson for Grades 9–12
- [Crow Reservation Timeline](#) from the Indian Education Division of the Montana Office of Public Instruction
- On an [Apsáalooke beaded jacket](#) from the Fralin Museum at the University of Virginia

On the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Nation

- [A Brief History of the Mohican Nation, Stockbridge Munsee Band](#) (pdf)
- [Official website](#)
- Lesson plans for Grades 4–5 tied to the MA Curriculum (coming soon)

On Teaching Indigenous History/Cultures

- [American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving](#): Educator Resource from the National Museum of the American Indian
- [Changing Racist Sports Teams Names](#) from the Anti-Racism Daily newsletter
- [“Columbus Who? A Dialogue on Discovery with Three-Year Olds”](#) reflection on using puppets to teach about colonization and discovery
- [Dawnland Voices](#): Indigenous Writing from New England and the Northeast
- [Everyday Native](#): Grades 4–12 interdisciplinary curricular resources “created to help bridge the gap of understanding that is held about Native Americans by non-Indians.”
- [“Grandpa’s Drum”](#): PBS guide to talking with children about the history of American Indian boarding schools through an episode of *Molly of Denali*

- [How to Honor Indigenous Peoples with Your Kids, Today and Every Day](#) from PBS
- [Illuminatives](#): distance-learning interdisciplinary [lesson plans](#) around Native representation in pop culture and the media
 - [Becoming Visible Report](#)
- [The Indigenous Digital Archive Treaties Explorer](#): collection of digitized treaties between Indigenous tribes and the U.S. Government, including treaties with the Crow tribe from 1825 and 1826
- [Lessons of Our Land](#): PreK-12 interdisciplinary lesson plans on Native culture and history
- [Native American Children's Literature Recommended Reading List](#) from the First Nations Development Institute
- [Native Knowledge 360](#) from the National Museum of the American Indian has many lesson plans and resources
- Not Your Mascots activist campaign: [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts
- PBS Documentary Series [“We Shall Remain”](#)
- [Teaching Native American Histories from UMass](#): resources and professional development for K-12 educators
- Teaching Tolerance
 - [Indigenous People's History Webinar](#) for educators
 - [Indian Education Classroom Resources for Remote Learning](#)
- [The Upstander Project](#) has produced two documentary films, *Dawnland* and *Dear Georgina*, about the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 and how the foster system has particularly harmed Indigenous Americans. Its [Dawnland Teacher Guide](#) includes resources and lesson plans for teaching Indigenous history — from pre-contact to today — in the classroom.

On Land Acknowledgements

- [Are You Planning to do a Land Acknowledgement?](#) Blog from American Indians in Children's Literature: blogpost and resources for children's literature
- [Honor Native Land](#) 4-minute video from the U.S. Department of Arts and Culture
- [Indigenous Land Acknowledgement, Explained](#) from *Teen Vogue*
- Native Land [interactive map](#) to identify Indigenous territories
- [Whose Land?](#) maps of Indigenous territories with resources and videos
- “You Are On Indigenous Land” [downloadable posters](#) from the Upstander Project

On Dioramas

- Interactive Exploration of [“Windows on Nature”](#) at the American Museum of Natural History on Google Arts & Culture, including the process of making dioramas, videos, and augmented reality experiences of select Great Habitat Dioramas in their collection.

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MASS MoCA

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