

## **Tamara Bunnell**

### **Carlisle Lesson Plan**

Context: These activities will both be part of a longer unit of study around the historical experiences, contributions, and treatment of Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest. Preceding and between these activities will be lessons on the pre-European invasion culture and history of the region, PNW treaties, creation of the reservation system, Native American stereotypes and their origins, the general history, structure, and impact of the Indian Boarding Schools, contemporary related issues, and various readings, including *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie, which explores aspects of Native American education among other things.

For this first lesson, students will learn about the application system to Carlisle. I will introduce the Carlisle website and archive to the whole class and we will zoom in on students with local ties, ending with the file of John Bastian of the Puyallup tribe, who entered Carlisle in 1909. We will read the *Indorsement from Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School* text (below) together, then students will work on their own or in pairs to complete the accompanying questions. After students have completed the assignment, we will discuss their answers together, weaving in additional factual information about the intent and impact of the schools.

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### **Indorsement Activity**

Instructions:

1. Read the text below closely and look up any words that are new to you.
2. Put the text into your own words.

Then, answer the following questions:

3. Whose voice are we hearing in this text?
4. How many generations back do you need to go to be 1/16 of something?
5. Do you know who your own relatives/ancestors were that far back? Do you still retain the language and cultural practices they did? Why or why not?
6. What do you think is meant by “Indian Fashion” in the text?
7. What is meant by the phrase “for all intents and purposes white people”?
8. Whose cultural values are being taken into account in this policy?
9. What can we learn about perceptions of white and Native American identity through this policy?
10. (optional) Are you aware of any other groups of people who had similar treatment around education?

From the text of *Indorsement from Application for Enrollment in a Nonreservation School*, 1909

A child showing one-sixteenth or less Indian blood, whose parents live on an Indian reservation, Indian Fashion, who, if debarred from the Government schools, could not obtain an education, may be permitted in the reservation day and boarding schools, but it is preferable that it be not transferred to a nonreservation school, without permission from the Office. Children showing one-eighth or less Indian blood, whose parents do not live on an Indian reservation, whose home is among white people where there are churches and schools, who are presumed to have adopted the white man's manners and customs, and are to all intents and purposes white people, are debarred from enrollment in the Government nonreservation and reservation schools. Superintendents, in all cases where doubt exists as to the degree of Indian blood of a child proposed for transfer, should fully satisfy themselves of the facts by affidavits from reliable persons, which affidavits must be kept on file at school.

A pupil who has been regularly enrolled in a nonreservation school must not be taken to any other nonreservation school without the consent of both Superintendents and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and Superintendents will be held to strict accountability for such pupils taken to their schools.

A pupil dismissed from school for cause must not be enrolled in any other school without the permission of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Full facts must be submitted with each request.

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### **Single Story Activity**

1. Working individually with computers and using the Carlisle archive, students will be assigned to a Carlisle student from Washington State to find and read about. Minimally, each student should read the student files and the additional material I give them (gleaned from other sources), but should feel free to use other databases and search engines to seek out additional information. Approximately 3 students will research each name and there will be a total of 6 or 7 Carlisle graduates assigned, who will have had very different Carlisle experiences and very different lives. Potential names to research are Emma Rainey, William Hazlett, James Phillips, John Arquette, Alex Acasa....
2. The students will then join other students who had the same person, and they will write a short biography (could be in paragraph or list format) about their person, including their Carlisle experience, then answer the question: Based on this story, how would you describe the Carlisle school experience?
3. Back in the full class format, each group will share their bio and their answer to the question. The results should vary significantly.

4. We will then watch Chimamanda Adichie's TED talk, "The Danger of a Single Story" and discuss. Is there a single Carlisle story? Does any group of people have a single story? Is there a group of people about whom you've only heard a single story? Etc.
5. For homework, students will complete a 15-minute journal write on some or all of the following questions: Thinking about your own identity, do you think there is a single story that is told about you? What is that story and how accurate is it? Where does it come from or what cultural, social, and historical factors have influenced it? How does it make you feel? How is it different than how you understand your story or the story of your people? Is there anyone for whom you only know a single story? Where did you learn it? Do you think it is accurate? If not, how could you learn more or more accurate stories about that group?