

## Exploring the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center (CISDRC)

by Name, Nation, Time, and Place

### Student Worksheet Secondary School (8-12)

*Tens of thousands of children and young people were sent to the Carlisle Indian School from all across the country. Founded in 1879 near the end of the “Indian” wars, the school was meant to “civilize” Indian children and assimilate them into Euro-American society. Young people were deliberately sent far from home in order to break ties with their Native communities and traditions.*

*Who were these students? Where did they come from? Why were they sent here? How did they get here? What was their experience like? What was life like at the school? What did the students gain? What did they lose? What did they miss? How might you have felt? What happened to them after they left the school? There are so many questions to be asked and answered – over time and from multiple perspectives.*

*What was the mission of the school and how successful was this “experiment in educating and assimilating Native American young people?” What were students taught? What methods were used? How was life at the school structured? What forms of discipline were used? How did it affect students’ lives after they left the school? How does it affect Indians today?*

\*Read: “Kill the Indian, and Save the Man”: Capt. Richard H. Pratt on the Education of Native Americans. Source: *Official Report of the Nineteenth Annual Conference of Charities and Correction* (1892), 46–59. Reprinted in Richard H. Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites,” *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the “Friends of the Indian” 1880–1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 260–271.

[Excerpt from Pratt’s Speech](#)

[Shorter version for 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grades](#)

View map - [Locations of Off-Reservation Indian Boarding Schools in the U.S.](#)

1). What were Pratt’s goals? Why did he want to establish the Carlisle Indian School? What did he want the Carlisle Indian Industrial School to do?

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2) Go to the Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center [www.carlisleindian.dickinson.edu](http://www.carlisleindian.dickinson.edu) and go to explore student files.

Guiding Questions:

- a) When was the Carlisle Indian School(CIS) established? And where?
- b) When did the first students arrive at the Carlisle Indian School – give date. Where were they from?
- c) What does this suggest about the flagship school (located in the East near the end of the era of the Indian wars)?

- d) When did it close? How many years was it in operation?
- e) How many children were sent to CIS? And from where?
- f) What were the goals of the Carlisle Indian School? What were Pratt's intentions? Why was CIS established?
- g) Research one of the Indian nations that sent students to Carlisle. Where were they located geographically? How far were they from Carlisle?

For further independent research: What do you know, can you find out about this Nation? Origin stories? World view, cultural beliefs and values? Relationship to nature? What was their political economy – the basis of most people's livelihoods? Gender norms and relationships?

- h) Read 4 student files from that nation – what can be gleaned about their life at CIS from their files? List their names here – and under each, provide a brief summary and record any particularly interesting details or quotations.
- i) Analyzing what you found in the student files and your research on one of the nations, how did students' experience at Carlisle differ from what they had likely been accustomed to at home?
- j) Imagine yourself as a child send to the Carlisle Indian school. How do you think you may have felt? What may you have thought? What questions may you have asked?
- k) In order to get more out of this assignment, you may want to read one or more of the following books or articles to gain a better understanding of how and why these young people were sent to CIS and what they encountered there.

2. Read 1of the following student files and fill in the table below (15-20minutes) and be ready to share information about this student with your classmates:

Name of student	Arrival date at CIS	Nation/Place Where are they from?	Note 2 interesting things you learned from the file.

3). What does this tell you about this students' experience at the CIIS?

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4). What more would you like to know about this student's experiences?

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5). a. Imagine yourself as a young person sent to the school from your native community. What might you have felt? What would you have wanted? What would you have gained? What would you have missed?

b. Write a short letter to Capt. Henry Richard Pratt. What would you want to tell him?