

From Empathy to Advocacy: Storytelling for Social Justice Education through the
English Language Arts

Shifting Perspective: Authenticity, Representation, and Reality in Pictures

DeLyssa K. Begay

Diné Institute for Navajo Educators (DINÉ)

2021

Author Note:

DeLyssa K. Begay teaches English Language Arts and Southwest Studies at Rehoboth Christian High School. Email contact: dineteacherinstitute@nau.edu

Abstract

This curriculum unit is designed for high school students in grades 9 & 10 English Language Arts. The theme for the unit is shifting perspective about Native Indigenous people in early photographs taken in the late 1800's, and the central text is a speech delivered by Thomas King, Cherokee writer, professor, photographer, and activist, titled, "You're not the Indian I had in Mind." Thomas King's overall claim is stories are powerful and stories come in different forms, mediums, and constructions. This essay is focused on the subject of Native Indigenous people in early photographs that addresses racism, constructed images, and representation of the Native people. Students will research, read, and discuss the speech/lecture, explore the evidence King references, and reflect on Thomas King's personal life stories. They will then create a personal portfolio of pictures and narrative reflections about identity and representation.

Context

Rehoboth Christian High School is located in Rehoboth, New Mexico, a village on the outskirts of Gallup, New Mexico. Currently, the high school has an enrollment of about 180 students from grades nine to twelve. Rehoboth has 100 permanent residents, and it is located near the Navajo Nation, and some of the checkerboard sections of the Navajo Reservation. The Navajo Nation retained portions of their land base in the Treaty of 1868, and some are in sections. The Zuni Reservation and the nearest Pueblo is about forty-fives miles from Rehoboth.

Rehoboth Christian High School is a non-profit private Christian school. Tuition is based on a sliding scale with many students who are sponsored by families throughout the United States. The school's scholarship program monitors and has students keep contact with their sponsors. There are private scholarships available to high school students, and the Navajo Nation's scholarship program offers financial assistance to students who attend private schools. It is based on need and a formal application process. A large percentage of students receive free and reduced lunches - there is funding from the food program.

Rehoboth Christian School was established in 1903 by the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) from the state of Michigan. There are many teachers and volunteers who have Dutch ancestors and relatives who permanently settled in Rehoboth, Zuni, and Gallup, New Mexico. Most student-teachers are from Christian colleges in Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, and Washington. The Navajo / Native American teachers are from Gallup and surrounding areas -- Tohatchi, Twin Lakes, Window Rock, and Church Rock.

Rehoboth students are bussed in daily - the farthest from the east is Crownpoint (60 miles), and the west Allentown, Arizona (40 miles). The bus route includes Tohatchi, Iyanbito, Thoreau, Zuni Pueblo, Window Rock and Lupton, Arizona. Most students begin their bus ride to school at 6 a.m., and return home at 5 p.m, spending from 1.5 - 3 hours a day traveling to and from school. The students who participate in extracurricular activities must arrange transportation as there are no after school activity bus routes. These students, most of whom are school athletes, do not return home until six or seven in the evening.

The school was founded as Christian Reformed mission school, but today it is open to several Christian denominations, and those who observe and practice the Navajo and Zuni traditional beliefs. A previous director stated that the early history of Rehoboth as a mission school negatively impacted Navajo language and culture. Since its centennial celebration, Rehoboth Christian has stated that it will intentionally work to incorporate and recognize Navajo and Zuni language and culture.

I teach the 9th and 10th English Literature and Composition Foundations 1 and 2 classes. This is the second year in which my classes integrate both 9th and 10th graders. The class sessions are the block format - one hour and half long classes, two times a week, with a short 50-minute class on Fridays. This year, I will co-teach with a teacher who will serve as a resource to students who have academic challenges in the language arts. Based on the assessment and input from middle school teachers, there is a need for a couple of classes to accommodate students who have individual learning plans.

Because of the pandemic and virtual remote learning in Rehoboth, I was not able to meet all of the ninth graders from the 2020-2021 school year. So, in this upcoming school year, I will meet, for the first time, in person, some of the 10th grade students. At the start of March 2020, classes were held online in either Google Meets or Zoom. Rehoboth attempted hybrid classes, but with COVID surges in the area, especially the Navajo Nation and Zuni Village, most of the school year was conducted online.

Rehoboth serves primarily Navajo students and families, so the school complied with the Navajo Nation restrictions and precautions. Several staff members, students, and student families were directly impacted by COVID19. There were several students who had contracted COVID19, and later shared that they felt stigmatized for having contracted the illness. Our students experienced immense stress and trauma as they were separated from their friends, a school routine, and dealing with family all the time.

COVID19 altered the funeral rituals for the diverse families represented in the school, which altered the grieving process and practices. Navajo and Zuni families who lost family members were not able to grieve or follow the protocols of their cultural mourning practices. As this school year begins, it seems there will be memorials or remembrances of the lost of loved ones which will impact the students and their families.

The COVID pandemic affected families in many different ways -- exasperating conditions of family members who struggled with substance abuse, mental illness, unemployment, and divorce. A major concern and issue that many educators address at the national level is student behavior and their re-adjustment to a school routine. Students have not had a "normal" school year since 2018-2019. There has been a loss of a normal routine in an academic setting, and the behavioral expectations for mask wearing, social distancing, and human interaction are new habits to integrate into school life.

Rationale

Photographs and Pictures

The photographs taken in the 1880s-1920s by Edward Curtis and photographers like him, began to construct an image and story about the Navajo people. Edward Curtis' photographs started to construct the identity of a general "Indian," much like, if not, the literary "Indian." Today, Native Indigenous people and other voices of authority question Edward Curtis' methods and practices. Thomas King, writer and activist, asserts in an argument that Edward Curtis photographs created the image of an "Indian" that focused only on their appearance and facial expressions. Those pictures evoke different emotions to different audiences, and one hundred years later, the descendants of those in the photograph deal with new issues. Issues that focus on appearance -- how "Indian" do you look? Are you a real Indian if you don't look like one?

We live in a society that is focused on the visual - pictures, videos, snapshots. Many people spend time taking pictures of themselves, the food they eat, the vacations, and whatever they want to share with the public. The smartphone has features and memory to hold thousands of pictures and videos, and people can easily photoshop and manipulate pictures with filters, cropping, and other features in the editing feature. When we listen to the news about people and their social media accounts, we discover that in many cases all the beautiful pictures do not truly depict a happy life - that the pictures fooled the audience.

Photographs tell stories, and the person behind the picture is the one creating that story. The images of the "Indian" portrayed a people, not often an individual human being, but a people who were defeated. The expression of people with stoic features dressed in regalia showed people who lost land base, family members, customs, and sovereignty. In the Navajo Diné culture, there had been an aversion to photographs as the image on the paper held an image of the person as if it were alive. That traditional belief was that photographs and similar images could be manipulated to harm people. Since photoshop and social media have become more widespread and accessible, many people have accepted and adapted to pictures taken often, sometimes, several times a day.

The Vanishing Race

American Romanticism is noted as the first literary movement in the young United States that had not yet been fully formed. The focus was on nature. Part of the innocent landscape had been the Indigenous peoples who were in the midst of forced relocation and assimilation. Treaties had been negotiated between the United States and the Indigenous nations, but many of the treaties had already been broken. That reality is not mentioned as much as the idea and creation of the "vanishing race," the idea that the Indigenous people would become extinct. The Federal policies enacted in that time period displaced Indigenous peoples to make room for American settlers.

The literary "Indian" written about in novels was a character who was often the last of his people, one who entrusted his child-like loyalty to a white male, and one who told his trusted white friend that it was inevitable that the Americans would become dominant. The "Indian" was not threatening, but thankful. Writers romanticized the death of a people, a race of people, who incidentally faced awful Federal policies at that time. Edward Curtis, renowned photographer, also illustrated that theme in the pictures he took of Indigenous people.

Storytelling

Often, when I look at the origin story of a people or a group, I want to have a sense of how the people define themselves. Who are they? Where did they come from, and how did they get here? The stories often reveal the way the people see the world. Is the world a place where the people battle the elements or develop relationships with the environment they inhabit? Stories often explain how things came to be, and these are often considered ancient or ancestral stories.

Traditionally, stories were told by a storyteller, sung by medicine people, or illustrated on rock formations. It seemed that the people had to express and share the stories with other people. At the turn of the century, ethnographers, anthropologists, and photographers visited with many Indigenous people like the Navajo. Social scientists studied the Navajo and they recorded stories, ceremonial songs, and pictures of the Navajo people. This form of documentation led to stories about the Navajo people in which they had little control of how they were portrayed to a larger audience. An audience that had a hard time seeing them as human beings, but rather as inferior in a child-like manner.

Representation, Authenticity, and Identity Unit

This unit will focus on the representation of the Native American people in photographs. What does a Native person look like? What happens when one does not fit the image of what it is to be “Indian” or “Native”? These are specific and narrow questions that will allow students to explore the issue of representation, authenticity, and identity through photography.

Photographs of Indigenous people taken in the 1890s - 1920s by Edward S. Curtis are still in circulation and often sold as postcards in tourist shops in many cities and towns in the country. The romanticized image of the “Indian” is often portrayed as an Indigenous person dressed in traditional regalia who looks stoic and noble. The impact of those photographs is still felt today in how the general public expects Native American people to look and behave. It is linked to the mascot issue and objectification of Native people. Thomas King, Cherokee professor, scholar, and writer, delivered a series of lectures in Canada called the Massey Lecture Series in 2003. His lecture speeches were collected and printed under the title, *The Truth about Stories: A Native Memoir*.

The lecture series focused on storytelling from the Native Indigenous perspective. The power of stories to create a world, explain creation, and illustrate the way different cultures see the world. His lectures are formatted as arguments as he states his claims, shares his evidence, identifies counterarguments, and offers rebuttals. Thomas King is far from confrontational, instead, he uses humor and self-deprecation from personal stories to show humility to his audience. He addresses the ugly reality of racism and discrimination with his personal experiences woven into his arguments. At one point, he states that he is not attempting to elicit pity, but to state facts. In each of these lectures, he returns to storytelling in different forms to address different issues that Native Indigenous people encounter daily for centuries.

The essay for this unit is titled “You are not the Indian I Had in Mind.” It is a catchy title, as the author weaves multilayers of stories from different sources to address racism, stereotypes,

representation, and authenticity. Thomas King's focus is on photographs and expeditions taken by Edward S. Curtis and the impact of those photographs on how people visualized Native American people. He takes into account early American Romantic literature to give some historical context to the literary world, along with Federal Indian Policy of Indian Removal. King also writes about another photographer, a contemporary of Curtis, Richard Throssel. Throssel was Cree and English, worked on the Crow Indian Reservation, and he took thousands of pictures of the Crow in portrait style, but also in their everyday life settings. He had been adopted by the Crow which gave him access to even ceremonial life. Edward Curtis met Throssel in Montana, he even shared his photography techniques with Throssel.

Thomas King included personal anecdotes about his physical appearance that lead to uncomfortable racist encounters. He is focused on photography which leads to the issue of mascots and offensive images of Indigenous peoples - caricatures of exaggerated and racist images of Indigenous people in the media, on products, and symbols for athletic teams. Thomas King makes the point in this essay that the image of the "Indian" was created by photographers like Edward Curtis at the turn of the century. Edward Curtis did not want to show that the Native Indigenous people had begun to change to adapt to new realities in their lives: Manifest Destiny, Indian Removal, residential schools, and broken treaty agreements.

The lecture is framed as an argument, and my students will review the parts of an argument, identify rhetorical techniques he incorporates to support his thesis. Students will then explore their own opinions about Native Indigenous representation, authenticity in photographs in the age of social media, and what it is to be an Indigenous person in contemporary times. They will read poems, vignettes, and review pictures submitted by contemporary Indigenous people as they reflect about Native Indigenous people and cultures in contemporary times. After reading and analyzing the lecture, students will discuss the issues, compare and contrast, and then complete a final product a photo essay with a written response.

As this type of exploration is challenging, especially after the 2020 school year, I want to include some mindful practices in the classroom. Short journaling reflections will be incorporated to bring some time to center. For example, at the end of the day, many of my students are tired as they begin their last 90-minute class. I want to give ten minutes to reframing thoughts, journaling and also preparing students for the unit.

Poetry is an interesting genre as there are many rules and suggestions, and also none at all. The use of poetry will give students different ways that word choice is important to poets, in that I think poets are very intentional about the words they choose - often more concise than full length essays or prose. Poetry allows students to look at words separately and in context. Sometimes it is like a puzzle, and one that allows students to explore word denotations, connotations, and etymology.

Pairing short stories with poetry allows closer examination and reflection on themes -- different voices, experiences, and identities. I admit that I often include more female voices and women of color in my collections because of how little exposure women of color get in mainstream media, not unless it follows some deeply entrenched stereotypes.

Content Objectives

There are several objectives that I want my students to accomplish. I want them to read critically and to develop their own conclusions based on the materials provided to them. I want students to review the parts of an argument and to identify the elements and evidence of an argument. I want students to form an opinion based on the reading and their prior knowledge as to whether they agree or disagree with the author and their reasoning. Finally, I want their final project to allow students to reflect on their personal experiences and opinions about the topic, and then to create their own written or photographic essay about identity, authenticity, and representation.

Living in more than one culture is a reality for many of my students, whether that be in Native Indigenous cultures with dominant society, or living as a Christian in a secular society, or even identifying as a Christian in a Native Indigenous culture. These stories and struggles are conveyed by language in the written, spoken, and illustrated forms. I have noticed that many of my students' wrestle with these different issues as they begin to explore their identities apart from their parents' and community's expectations.

There is a quote from N. Scott Momaday's prologue in *The Way to Rainy Mountain* about one's sense of identity and its connection to language. Momaday explores what it means to be Kiowa, to be a human being who belongs to a specific group of people.

In one sense, then, the way to Rainy Mountain is preeminently the history of an idea, man's idea of himself, and it has old and essential being in language. The verbal tradition by which it has been preserved has suffered a deterioration in time. What remains are fragmentary; mythology, legend, lore, and hearsay -- and of course, the idea itself, as crucial and complete as it ever was. That is the miracle. (p. 2)

I interpret Momaday's passage as to note that stories change - stories are not static. In the migration or movement of living life, things, details change. I want to caution that reminiscing about the "old" days as the time when all was "perfect" and "true," because it can distort how we see ourselves today. My students may be the first to tell me that stories change. The interests of young people have drastically changed by way of the internet, gaming, and social media. It is apparent that there is a sense of instant gratification.

Stories change, and we hope it is at the discretion of the teller of the story. Thomas King begins and ends each speech in this collection with specific patterns. The introduction, in its written format, has almost the same words and sentence structure, with subtle changes in place names, gender pronouns, and names. The conclusion also follows a similar pattern with subtle details to the ending, which essentially tells the audience to use any parts of the story to change or add to one's own story, or not, and to acknowledge that either way the audience/reader has "heard" the story, and cannot deny it.

In the speech, "You're Not the Indian I Had in Mind," Thomas King is still centered on storytelling and its power to shape, connect, and define a person's identity through photographs.

He recounts several stories in which Native Indigenous people have been stereotyped and had stories written about them that takes away any agency to just be whomever they are as people. Having other people or organizations define a person is an issue many young people face in terms of parental and societal expectations, but also peer expectations, especially through and by social media. Most of my students have social media accounts for snap chat and instagram, and most recently, TikTok has become a popular social networking site.

Images in photographs and videos are at the core of daily teenage life, and my students are greatly influenced by it. My content objectives are for my students to read background history of the impact of images in society, especially for Native Indigenous peoples. The image of Native people has been objective for centuries, and often these images are created by non-Native Indigenous people who then create their own stories to accompany these photographs of “Indian” people. I want my students to read a speech that builds an argument with a claim, supportive evidence, counter arguments, rebuttals, and a conclusion. Students can then readily agree, disagree, and hopefully, understand the author, Thomas King’s position.

The content will allow students to review the evidence that Thomas King uses to make his point -- they will research, and then explore through writing and discussion as to whether it is effective. Students will spend an extended amount of time reviewing photographs taken by Edward Curtis and Richard Throssel to examine their technique and methods. Students will slow down and analyze photographs, and ponder the intent of the photographer. We also live in a tourist town that borders the Navajo Nation and Zuni Pueblo. The economy is dependent on visitors in the Southwest, and the style of “Western” or “Native American photography and style” easily lends itself to stereotypes and objectification of Native Indigenous peoples.

The historical context is important and can be overwhelming, so I will focus on idea of the “vanishing Indian/race”, the photographers, Thomas King’s personal stories, except for one in which he describes the racist cartoon and remarks made by a former staffer at a job he worked outside of the United States. I want students to then come back to 2021, and their relationship with images, photographs, and stereotypes. How are they able to stay authentic to themselves, if that is even an issue, or how the image of the Native Indigenous people is still affected by the early photography and movies that keep the stoic, proud, and vanishing Indian alive in memory. What are their stories today, and is it strongly dependent on photographs and pictures?

Teaching Strategies

Pomodoro Technique (modified)

At the start of the school year, my goal is to create a safe environment. The COVID-19 Delta variant has led to an increase in positive cases on the Navajo Reservation communities that Rehoboth Christian Schools serve. At the start of the school year, several families had exposure to positive cases with some testing positive. Several students have been absent at the start of the school year because of quarantine, and it is interesting to notice that students who have been vaccinated have requested for assigned seating next to other students who have been vaccinated. To help with contact tracing, all classes need to have seating charts with student names.

Because of the heightened vigilance of the “Delta surge”, I have made it a daily habit to kindly remind students to encourage compassion for one another by wearing masks. I have received notice that several students are dealing with the loss of close family members to COVID-19, and trauma in sudden loss of family members by other causes. A strategy that I have implemented is called a “pomodoro,” and it is a writing technique to bring writing and specific time requirements. I have modified the technique and will set aside five to ten minutes at the start of class to write or draw. I play music and ask students to keep pen to paper by writing or illustrating so that students begin to focus. Their writing prompt is very general and open to any subject -- “write about anything on your mind.”

The free-writing and illustration time is for students, especially the students in my afternoon classes, to settle their minds and heart rates. Most of the students in my seventh hour, for example, come from one of the following classes: band, choir, mathematics, or physical education. They often are excited and highly energetic or exhausted. My classroom is hot with little air conditioning, and I have one fan. The piano music and writing/illustration drawing calms students. The students do not have to share their journals or drawings with me or their fellow students. This is private, and I respect their privacy. I trust they are working on the activity as they have pencil to paper for the entire time. I encourage students to get what is on their minds out, so that we can focus on the content and learning activities.

I share with my students that the process of “getting it out” helps them release some powerful thoughts that often distract them from fully engaging in the lesson and assignment. Not all students are dealing with trauma, but they have concerns or ideas that may distract them. Several students are inclined to illustrations, rather than writing, and I encourage students to choose either as an outlet. As the year progresses, I will use this time for students to review reading materials or notes, and in the Pomodoro’s original intent -- as a writing technique to combat procrastination or writer’s block on specific writing exercises.

Class Discussion

An essential component of the unit will rely on discussion as students will share their opinions, observations, and insights about the literature. My goal is for students to converse by initially understanding the topic at hand, to formulate opinions, to share their opinions, and then to hear opposing or affirming opinions. During these conversations, my goal is for students to share and exchange ideas - ideas they may agree or disagree. When people take time to listen to one another, and try to understand the viewpoint of another, we can begin to see one another as people. The skills needed for this level of engagement are delivered in steps, and these are valuable skills to have in a society that believes in free speech, and hopefully, discussions that offer different viewpoints.

I teach ninth and tenth grade students; the vast majority who do not openly participate in whole class discussions. There are different reasons that students do not participate: many do not feel confident in their understanding of the content, the topic may be one that they are not interested in, or the questions may feel too personalized, creating a sense of vulnerability, and always an valid reason, the teacher may not have crafted effective questions to engage a discussion. Ineffective questions and assumptions made by the teacher can easily create an environment that

favors a certain number of students, and loses other segments of the class. The whole group discussion will be one of the final activities and assessment, as the following strategies will be implemented to create a foundation for larger group discussions.

Small groups like pair-share and flexible grouping will enable students to get to know one another, and develop a level of trust and familiarity with one another. My students, like many teenagers, feel comfortable with their friends and gravitate to friends. Many of my students often distract one another when they work with only their friends. Some patterns and habits also emerge in which certain students are ascribed a certain role in the group and that role tends to stay with the group. It is natural that students, and most people, will find friends or people they know and feel comfortable.

I think smaller groups will help students get to know each other as they read and complete reading activities together. Smaller groups will also allow students to participate in different roles, and practice building reading comprehension. Flexible grouping is a strategy that allows for differentiated instruction. I will separate groups based on reading ability, interests, and learning styles; often, I use random grouping. Most of the time, I am aware of how students interact with one another, meaning that I have some students who distract one another, and I will likely keep them in separate groups. I also share common norms for collaborative work pairs or groups.

In both small and large groups, I find that I will need to simply and explain directions for any of the collaborative group activities. Students easily get lost when there are too many directions, and the objective is not stated at the start of the activity. I will provide questions and stems to begin discussions in the small groups. It is important that I share with students the benefits of class discussions, and also the challenges in creating conversations that bring about an exchange of ideas. The earliest steps are building reading comprehension, and connecting prior knowledge to background information.

Reading Comprehension Strategies

Building vocabulary, specifically in the area of academic language, is important for students to understand the nuances of the word choice by authors, and to reinforce literary terms and elements. My students will work on vocabulary development collaboratively. Students will use a modified version of the Manzano method in which they will find the definitions, parts of speech, along with antonyms and synonyms. I will have students read the sentences from the story that use that word, and then they will illustrate their interpretation of the word on a large sheet of paper as a poster. After students have completed their vocabulary word posters, they will post them for a gallery walk of the different vocabulary words and illustrations.

Students will work with a partner or partners to explain their process and understanding of the vocabulary word. Students will all have a sheet of paper with the words, and take notes to fill in the rest of the words. This process may take almost an entire block period, but it is an activity that will allow students to collaborate, identify the different skills and talents they have, and then to present to their classmates, which will give them more practice in sharing their ideas.

Students using graphic organizers to identify key elements, plot, characterization, and comparing and contrasting will aid in understanding and comprehending the stories. These graphic organizers also provide a visual component for students who need to see and record key elements and details of the short stories. The Venn Diagram, for example, is an effective tool in comparing and contrasting two stories, and having the graphic organizer allows students to add other details. Another example is a graphic organizer to help identify and organize specific details to central ideas in a reading selection. Character charts are also an effective graphic organizer to capture details, list them, and to use the information to create illustrations.

Another skill I want my students to incorporate is identifying and noting details from the story that the student recognizes as interesting, “right/wrong”, or questionable, and then to explain why that detail is important to the student. Annotation allows students to closely read the text and to note new words to the student, to find details, and to make notations as to why particular caught the attention of the student. The closer reading allows students to process the information and interact with the text. Many of my students doodle or sketch images when taking notes or reacting to reading assignments. I want to encourage that interaction with the text so that they better understand and comprehend the story.

Technology - Videos (YouTube) and Internet

I will show several video clips of interviews, documentaries, and gallery exhibitions to build background information. Thomas King uses many references in the essay that my students won't know right away, because much of it is generational. Thomas King writes about Edward Curtis, Richard Throssel, and Will Rogers, and these are figures who are not alive. My students may have seen their pictures, but I cannot depend on it. Many of my students are used to watching videos and visual stimulation, so listening and watching these videos will give them the opportunity to hear about it from experts who show primary sources. The websites also show the students photographs and research information about the people Thomas King references in his speech/lecture. Students will also look at a photograph portfolio created, but not completed by Thomas King and his brother, Christopher King. They traveled and took photographs of Native American writers, artists, and scholars with the intent to take their pictures like Edward Curtis.

Fine Arts: Illustrations and Creative Writing

I have used illustrations for many years as I find it challenges students to think and communicate in a way that he/she may not feel comfortable, but it also highlights the incredible illustrators whose talent is often regulated to art class. Because the content is focused on photographs and themes with rich imagery. I will utilize illustrations for vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and creative artistic activities. My students have various learning styles and using the differentiating instruction will benefit students who have strengths in certain drawing, but also challenge others who do not have it as developed. There are several students who have individual learning disabilities, and feel confident in their creative and artistic abilities, which has been able to transfer to show their understanding.

Creative Writing Exercises

Students will write literary responses as we work through the unit, but an area of writing that I want to encourage and practice is creative writing like vignettes, short narratives, and poetry. The Fine Arts program at Rehoboth consists of art, band, and choir. The musical fine arts program is well developed and most of the students participate in one of the programs. Creative writing is left to the English department, and it is an area of writing that a handful of students have thoroughly enjoyed, and most avoid. There seems to be a reluctance to the poetry writing because of the vulnerability of the content - whether it be personal to the student or the poet writing the poem. When I have incorporated poetry in my lessons, it seems that poetry with a specific structure is one that students feel comfortable with. I assume it is easier to focus on structure, and not so much the emotion or expression they feel.

I have several students in this school year who have expressed interest in poetry and writing poetry. One style of poetry - the concrete poem - is one that I have noticed success with students. A concrete poem requires that a poem to visually represent an image that is a symbol or theme of the topic at hand. I will hold a couple of poetry workshops for students to focus and complete their own concrete poems that relate to the theme of the stories. Another writing workshop will focus on a narrative piece about a place that is important to the student. The workshop will focus on reviewing short stories and descriptions about place and/or landscape. This style of writing is one I have used before, and will be another option to review in their final assessment for the unit. The final assessment will include a performance-based assessment, and these writing samples may be revised.

Creative writing is a style of writing that allows students to personally reflect on their comprehension and to show their understanding in non-traditional methods. I notice that my students are comfortable with writing straightforward responses, and cautious about sharing deeper, personal connections. Reasons will vary, but as adolescent people who spent about a year to a year and a half at home; it takes time to be vulnerable among their peers.

Classroom Activities

Early Lesson in the Unit: Vocabulary and Reading Guide

This lesson activity will be delivered early in the unit. It is a vocabulary activity in which I provide the definition for the key vocabulary phrase or idea. To complete this lesson, students will need access to Google Search for images. I am preparing them to read an essay about photographs and images. I include phrases from the essay, names of individuals mentioned, and concepts that relate to visual imagery. My students do not know the names, faces, or photographs of Edward Curtis, Richard Throssel, and Will Rogers.

This handout is focused on imagery; I want my students to visualize these ideas and people when they read the essay. Most of my handouts are designed for reading, identifying key ideas and terms, and responding to critical questions. I do not want my students to get distracted with paraphrasing definitions, but I prefer they see these images and practice drawing them. Many of my students respond well to illustrations. There are students who are not confident in their artistic skills, and I have reassured them that it is okay to copy the image. Illustrations allow

students to focus on specific details in shading, lines, and lighting. The important part of this is that students become familiar with the names and key terms, and their visual counterparts.

As I mentioned, this lesson will build on background knowledge for the content in the lesson, and to make the connection to the topic of photography and imagery. Students will have already completed an activity about Edward Curtis and finding out information about his personal life, contributions to society, and the controversies about his methods and techniques in photography and collection of ethnographic information about Native Indigenous peoples of the North American continent. I will ask students questions about Curtis, and then tell them that the Cherokee writer, Thomas King wrote an essay about what it means to look “Indian.” Since we read an essay by King in the first quarter, I will remind them of the background research to the multilayered essay.

Thomas King’s lecture (which I will also call his essay), “You Aren’t the Indian I Had in Mind,” is easy to separate into sections. Since Edward Curtis is mentioned in the beginning of the lecture, I want students to know about him and his photography. This handout also has information about other people mentioned in the essay, and the motif of the cowboy and Indian. This gives them a glimpse and a curiosity for the rest of the essay. I include questions so that students may reflect on social media today. That social media is filled with pictures and videos that people consume all the time. I want students to make a personal connection to the content of the unit.

Illustrating Key Ideas

Name: _____

Find these phrases as they are printed, and then illustrate the images from Google Image search. These names and phrases are mentioned in the essay by Thomas King. Please draw and illustrate to the best of your ability. These images are still in circulation.

Term/Phrase	Definition	Illustrate: Copy an image from Google Search -- You must illustrate it.
<i>“The Vanishing Race”</i>	A major theme in early American Romantic literature - an idea that the Indigenous people faced extinction and that they were noble and innocent in the time of progress. It was a powerful idea in the American move to “civilize” the western regions of the United States.	
<i>Edward Curtis photograph</i>	Photographs taken by Edward Curtis. He traveled and photographed Native American people in their traditional settings and clothing. Curtis is most famous for the portraits - close up photos of Indigenous people.	
<i>Richard Throssel photograph</i>	Photographs taken by Richard Throssel, who was Cree and English, and lived on	

	the Crow Reservation in the early 1900s. He was a photographer who was adopted by the Crow people. His photos included the portrait style, but also the everyday activities of the Crow people.	
<i>An image of Will Rogers</i>	Will Rogers was a Cherokee actor, performer, writer, and commentator. He had been regarded as a man who represented the “common man” He grew up in Oklahoma, and traveled extensively.	
<i>Cowboys and Indian Western movies</i>	A genre of movie that often took place in the western region of the United States. The plot often had a lone man who “tamed” the west, and the west included the Native American people. We often see the fights between the “cowboys and Indians”.	
<i>American Indian Movement protesters</i>	This movement took place in the Civil Rights era. The Native American group confronted Federal and state officials to bring attention to tribal Treaty rights and obligations. → illustrate a picture of the people involved in the movement and signs they used in their protest.	

1. The illustrations that you have completed are focused on images of Native American people. Based on these pictures and images, what story does it tell about Native American people?
2. What types of pictures or photographs would you consider for modern day representation of Native people?
3. Today, pictures are taken all the time with the use of our phones. Social media is powerful in the many images, pictures, and videos it contains. Currently, what social media platform is popular with teens and adolescents?
4. Do current social media platforms offer filters and other added features to alter pictures and videos? What types of filters are popular? Why?

Lesson for Small Group Discussion - Explanation for three handouts

I plan to deliver this lesson on a 1.5 hour block day. I will implement several steps to create an environment that will prepare students for this small group discussion. Small group discussion is a skill that requires several steps for my students who have not had the opportunity to regularly participate in a formal group discussion because of the pandemic. Some of my students are used to their friends, and I have a few students who experience anxiety when placed in groups with new people. My goal in preparation is to create a place where students are comfortable and I try to map out the activity.

When I prepared this unit, it was for my bigger thirty student classes, which are at the beginning and end of the school day. I work with students who are tired, and they sit in a full classroom. So, I write the instructions on the board, and I use a projector to also project the handouts and process; often, I repeat the directions several times. I have created several worksheets to guide the process, and one of the worksheets is a self-evaluation. The evaluation sheet is visually displayed before the group activity so that students see the expectations, and also ask questions if they want clarification.

I have included at the start of the activity, a handout (Handout A) with general questions about the part of the text they have read so far. I would like to have another discussion after the students have finished reading the last section of the text. My students will have the copies of their previous handouts as they serve like reading guides and evidence they have on hand. The questions and statements they respond to are intended for students to recount the content, but to also include their opinions. At the start of the unit, the students have worked on retrieving and reading about background information.

Because there is a substantial amount of “front loading”, and review of the evidence and support that Thomas King utilized in his speech, I want students to use the time to reflect on information, and to process it by first writing their opinions and reactions. I will encourage students to take their time and to notice their gut reactions to the questions. Students are welcomed to use their notes, prior handouts, and the text. I encourage them to form opinions and write them down, as they will then create questions to bring into the small group discussion.

The grouping will be flexible, as I often assign students by counting them off into random groups, but I make appropriate arrangements for students who deal with anxiety. In the situation of anxiety, I will ask students which classmates they are comfortable with working through the activity. In one of my classes, I work with a co-teacher who serves as a resource to students with formalized education plans. The co-teacher also helps with discussion and other activities in which I separate students into groups. For this activity, we will monitor the students, and if a student with anxiety prefers a teacher, I have one class in which that is available.

HANDOUT A

Before the small group discussion, please review these questions. Answer them and then share with the group. Please create questions you have about the topic -- what are you curious about?

1. Thomas King and his brother, Christopher King, set out on their own expedition to take pictures of Native people. Thomas King wants to photograph contemporary/modern Native people. Why did that project interest him?
2. What challenge did he and his brother realize when they saw a statue of Will Rogers? Do you think that issue is still relevant today - whether a Native person looks Native or not? Explain.
3. We know it is not Christ-like to judge who is Christian or not Christian enough, but does that happen today? What stereotypes are there about Christians, and/or Native people who identify as Christian?
4. Edward Curtis went about his work as a photographer and ethnographer with an image already set in his mind about Native Indigenous people. Do you think stereotypes are created by images? Do you think we still do that today? Explain.
5. What are your thoughts about Richard Throssel's work? How was his work different from Curtis'? Throssel used many of Curtis' techniques - do you think his photographs were more "authentic" than Curtis' -- why or why not?

Explanation of Handouts B and D

This handout is designed to help create questions and statements for their small group discussions. Small group discussion is a skill that requires preparation before it becomes a habit. I want students to create questions that they will take into their groups. In this handout, I provide language stems for students. I will share with students that these are stems to help them begin creating their own questions and statements to share with their group members.

After they have completed the previous open-ended questions in Handout A, I want students to reflect on their responses and to think about information they want to learn and share with their group members. So, if students are not sure about Edward Curtis or Will Rogers, for example, they can use category 2: Questions to create or complete a question. I will review how the stems are in specific categories and styles of questions. The stems help students to consider what they want to share or what they want to know.

I have one category that is not for questions about the text, but phrases and questions to invite other group members to participate. One of the criteria in the self-evaluation is to be aware about other group members' contributions to the discussion. I will explain that small group discussions is a learning experience so students can question, clarify, predict, connect, and comment about

the content. The last category is titled, “Invite other voices,” and the goal is for students to kindly or respectfully invite their members. This is important when I change groups and students are not working with their personal friends.

I have included instructions for students to refer back to, and I will share the instructions at the start of the activity. I have included space for them to write their questions. Students may use notes, prior worksheets, the questions from Handout A, and the text to review and create their questions. Again, the goal for students to begin their group discussions without the awkward pause and simply reading the questions I have provided and they have answered. An ongoing activity I want my students to practice with is creating their own questions so that they go into a discussion with purpose, and then to listen to their group members ideas. And that they engage in conversation, and create questions and comments and opinions based on their discussion.

Listening is an important part of the activity, and I leave space on the handouts so that students can take notes or record ideas or thoughts. I included *Handout D*, which lists some norms or rules for students to follow. These rules can be created by the students and teacher collaboratively, or by the teacher. Another goal is for students to eventually agree upon a set of norms for the whole class, small group, and within their own groups. Timekeepers often help keep the group on task. For this unit, I will also assign the groups by flexible grouping, so it is likely that students will not be seated with their regular partners. The norms will help as a guide.

Handout B

Preparation for Small Group Discussions Notes

Language Stems

1. Predictions	2. Questions	3. Clarification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>I bet that ...</i> ● <i>I wonder ...</i> ● <i>The next thing Thomas King will mention is...</i> ● <i>Because _____ happened, _____ will happen.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Why is ...</i> ● <i>Who is ...</i> ● <i>What does _____ mean?</i> ● <i>How does _____ fit with what happened before?</i> ● <i>Is this the same as _____ earlier in the essay?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>This makes sense because...</i> ● <i>This must mean...</i> ● <i>What s/he is saying here is ...</i> ● <i>What they said before makes sense now because ...</i>
4. Comments	5. Connections	Invite other voices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>I like the part where...</i> ● <i>I don't understand...</i> ● <i>The best part so far is ...</i> ● <i>The hard thing about this is ...</i> ● <i>I think that ...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>This reminds me of...</i> ● <i>This part is similar to...</i> ● <i>What's different here is ...</i> ● <i>This event makes me think of...</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>What do you think?</i> ● <i>We haven't heard from you, yet.</i> ● <i>Do you agree?</i> ● <i>What was your response to this question?</i> ● <i>I'm interested in what you think.</i>

Small group discussion is a great opportunity to learn from your classmates. We have been researching and getting a lot of information about Thomas King's speech. This discussion will give you the opportunity to question, to connect, and to comment about the information.

1. I will provide a question sheet for you to focus on the topic -- write your response.
2. Next: Take at least one language stem from each category and complete it as a complete statement or question.
3. You may have more than one stem in a category, but have at least one to begin the conversation.
4. Please reference the information we've researched in the past week and a half.

Write your questions from the stem group; practice using the stems. These questions will be a starting point, your questions and statements may change.

- Category 1:

- Category 2:

- Category 3:

- Category 4:

- Category 5:

Take Notes to comments that other people make:

(Page 2)

Explanation for Handout C

This handout is a self and group evaluation, and students will complete this form after the activity. Before we begin the activity, I will review the self-evaluation form with them to one present it, and the reason I want students to use this form of self-assessment. I am not able to listen to all the conversations for extended periods of time, and since the students are in the groups for the entire time, I respect their opinions. I want to orient them to the "values" or number rating scale. I want my students to use their best judgment and I can clarify any questions they may have about the form.

The self-evaluation form has the number rating scores, and also the short responses. These responses are more personalized for students to share their opinions and the moments they learned from their classmates in the discussion. I ask students to reflect on their small group discussion and to explain what they remember, what they heard that may have changed their mind or opinion. I also ask for feedback about the activity -- especially in the discussion portion of asking the questions they created. Were they able to utilize the question/statement stems to create discussion questions, and/or if they were able to come up with questions after listening to their group members share their opinions and experiences?

One of the key parts of the discussion is to practice listening to everyone in the group. It is easy for students to become invisible in discussions. I intentionally included language phrases and stems to welcome students to share their ideas. I also made sure in my group selection that I did not go beyond three people in a group, as it seems four or more can create a situation in which one or two people can avoid answering. I want students to even share in the discussion when they do not understand the content -- that that is okay, and that peers are able to support when there is confusion.

This activity is one in which I will reassign students to work and discuss with new partners. I may have students work together on a puzzle or ice-breaker activity to help them work together before discussing the issues or topics. Most of my students are in other classes together, but I want to mix them up, as many of them have worked with people they work with each day. Some of the students have not worked or discussed with some outside of the class, so this activity will require, very likely, the entire ninety-minute block period.

Another area I want students to focus on is -- listening. I want students to listen and I have provided some writing space for notes from conversations, which I note do not have to be full notes and quotes from comments. I review with students to show they listen by not talking or trying to get the attention of another student in another group, especially their friends who are in other groups. This self-evaluation provides an opportunity for students to use authentic assessment to review their own performance.

Handout C

Small Group Evaluation Sheet

Values: 3=Above Average; 2=Average; 1=Below Average; 0=non participant

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Myself</i>	<i>Partner: student</i>	<i>Partner: student</i>
<i>Participated in group discussion by starting conversations</i>			
<i>Helped keep the group on task and focused</i>			
<i>Contributed Ideas and questions by responding to other member's comments</i>			
<i>Listened respectfully by not looking at</i>			

<i>other groups or class members during conversation</i>			
<i>Used the language stems to create their own questions and statements</i>			
<i>Invited our group members to all share their ideas, and invited those who were not responding</i>			

Respond to the following questions about the discussion exercise.

1. What new ideas or clarification did you receive in this conversation?
2. Did you change your ideas on a specific issue or topic? How so? What convinced you to change?
3. How did you encourage one another to keep the conversation going as a learning experience?
4. Did you find the language stems useful and helpful in your small group discussion?
5. Was the time enough? How much time do you think works for a small group discussion?

Handout D

Discussion Norms:

- Invite everyone a chance to speak.
 - Listen respectfully and actively.
 - Criticize ideas, not individuals.
- Commit to learning, not debating.
 - Focus on the topic and time

Student Assessment Plan

Formative Assessment

Formative assessments will be used throughout the unit. A portion of the assignments are mini research assignments in which I provide links and sites for students to read and gather information. Gathering information will also include the use of illustrations and drawings to help students use visual graphics to gather information. It allows students to use a different part of their brain. The unit primary focuses are photographs and visual media, so using illustrations seems a nice way to tie in the theme of the unit. I also have several students who are talented illustrators and this will give them some room to utilize their skill in another content area.

Students will write informal short responses in their homework assignments. As students work on the mini-research searches and information collection, they will work with a partner to share and discuss the information. I will also show documentaries and interviews for students to visualize and hear the information and people's interpretations. In all of the notes and handouts that students complete, the students will have a formal small group discussion. Because I do not have enough chromebooks for a full twenty-eight-to-thirty-member class, students will need to work in pairs to complete some of the assignments. This will allow students to talk to one another about the questions that need to be answered, and to share their reactions about the information.

A formal small group discussion will require some build-up as my students have not been able to practice small group academic discussion because of the pandemic and shelter-in-place mandates. This activity will require questions to help them to reflect and consider their personal opinions. I will provide language and question stems to formulate their questions, and I will include stems and phrases for students to invite one another in the discussion. They will have rubrics to follow, and a self-evaluation to fill out about class participation.

Summative Assessment

The final project will be an authentic performance assessment. It will be performance-based as students will create a photographic essay that will focus on one of the unit themes: shifting perspectives, authenticity, storytelling, and identity. The goal is for the student to reflect on the themes and the content, and then create their personal interpretation in their photo essay, that the student will exercise their own agency by creating their own essay, expressing their ideas about a topic, and in the case of identity, choosing how the student wants to be have agency and control of telling their own story. This essay will be presented to the class as the final project for the unit.

Final Project for the Unit: Shifting Perspectives

The central text for the unit was a speech titled, "You're Not the Indian I Had in Mind." The title implies that someone made an assumption about what it is to be Indian/Native American. Have you ever met a person for the first time and the person was surprised, because they may have had a different perception about you, and you were not what they had expected. That can be surprising, and also a time to reflect about who you are and how you see yourself.

Big Questions:

- ***What is my story in photographs and pictures?***
- ***How does my identity change and evolve?***
- ***What quotes or themes do I connect with from the speech (text)?***

This project will require you to create a Google Slide presentation in which you answer one of the big questions. The speech that we read in class focused on photographs, images, authenticity,

and stories. Thomas King writes about the different stories that are created by the photographs, and the stories imposed on or about people, like the Native Indigenous people he wrote about.

This project is designed for you to reflect and create a photographic essay that shows who you are and what is important to you. Consider who or what you represent -- often we think about our faith, our school, our family and culture, and even organizations. For the purpose of this project, I ask that you use photographs that you or someone close to you has taken. You may use some previously taken photographs, or more recent photographs specially for this project.

Ten (10) Google Slides:

- | | |
|---|---|
| _____ Title of a theme you have created | _____ Photograph that relates to your theme |
| _____ Photograph that relates to your theme | _____ Photograph that relates to your theme |
| _____ Photograph that relates to your theme | _____ Photograph that relates to your theme |
| _____ Photograph that relates to your theme | _____ Photograph that relates to your theme |
| _____ Photograph that relates to your theme | _____ Conclusion -- Final Google Slide |

Presentation

The presentation will be delivered in the classroom, and will range from 2-5 minutes. Please rehearse your presentation; it helps with meeting the time limit. Because we wear masks in class, please use the practice time to help with voice projection. In your presentation, introduce your theme and show your photographs with an explanation at the end. You may answer questions the audience may have about your presentation.

(page 1)

Rubric for Final Project: Shifting Perspectives

Criteria	Emerging 1	Progressing 2	Accomplishing 3	Exceeding 4
Content	<i>The photo essay does not convey information or ideas relevant to themes explored in class.</i>	<i>The photo essay conveys a surface-level idea relevant to themes explored in class.</i>	<i>The photo essay conveys ideas or information relevant to themes explored in class.</i>	<i>The photo essay strongly conveys ideas relevant to themes explored in class. It may integrate additional research or outside knowledge.</i>
Acknowledge Positive influence	<i>Presentation does not include the slide page that mentions the name(s) of people or organizations that influenced you.</i>	<i>Presentation includes the Google slide that mentions the name(s) of people or organizations that influenced you. Some connection to your theme.</i>	<i>Presentation includes the Google slide that mentions the name(s) of people or organizations that influenced you. Is connected to the theme.</i>	<i>Presentation includes the Google slide that mentions the name(s) of people or organizations that influenced you. Is connected to the theme and mentioned in presentation</i>
Clarity / Organization	<i>Photographs seem to be randomly selected with no connecting thread.</i>	<i>Photographs are somewhat connected or organized around a selected theme.</i>	<i>Photographs are selected and arranged in an organized, interconnected way.</i>	<i>Photographs are well planned and organized around a clear connecting thread.</i>
Photographs	<i>Photos must be explained to</i>	<i>Photos have a lack of connection to the</i>	<i>Photos are interesting but the theme connection is</i>	<i>Photos have a clear statement and theme connection is evident. Photos</i>

	<i>understand the connection to the theme</i>	<i>thematic message</i>	<i>not obvious</i>	<i>could stand alone as a representation of theme</i>
Appearance	<i>The work does not reflect effort or care in presentation.</i>	<i>The work reflects some effort and care in presentation.</i>	<i>The work is visually appealing and reflects effort and care in presentation.</i>	<i>The work is visually appealing and reflects effort, attention to detail and care in presentation.</i>
Creativity	<i>No evidence of original, creative ideas.</i>	<i>Some evidence of original, creative ideas.</i>	<i>Clear evidence of original, creative ideas throughout the work and in the presentation.</i>	<i>The work includes an array of original, creative ideas, combining topics explored in class with new ideas in novel ways.</i>
Presentation, Mechanics, and Timing - at least 2 minutes, not more than 5 mins.	<i>Presentation has many mechanical errors (capitalization/spelling); Delivery is awkward & very brief; Presentation is late. 6 Google Slides</i>	<i>Presentation has some mechanical errors (capitalization/spelling); Delivery is not practiced and rambling, and over time limit. 8 Google Slides</i>	<i>Presentation has few to none mechanical errors (capitalization/spelling); Delivery is practiced and within time limit; presented on time. 10 Google Slides</i>	<i>Presentation has no mechanical errors (capitalization/spelling errors); Delivery is well rehearsed and made interesting, and within time limit; and presented on time. 10 Google Slides</i>

(page 2)

Alignment of Standards

Navajo Nation Diné Standards

The Navajo Nation Diné Standards I have selected are focused on reflection, and an awareness of self, which leads to changed behavior. The Navajo worldview is based on building relationships with the environment, the sacred, the people, and with oneself. There is emphasis on reflection and self-discipline. Self-discipline is a daily practice in which reflection is important. As a person matures and begins to see the connections to their surroundings, it is important in traditional Diné teaching to value personal thoughts and personality, because they lead to behaviors that can create security and acceptance, or behaviors that lead to insecurity and disharmony.

It is important in Diné traditional way of life to value oneself, because the belief is that the person is sacred and a child of Creation. Those are fundamental elements in identity formation. As a teacher, it is important that I present materials and lessons that focus on the big questions about content, academic standards, but also content that is culturally responsive to Navajo/Native American students. And, it is important that I support and respect the cultural and religious practices of my students. Identity, in the community I serve, is often tied to religious and spiritual beliefs; and even though I teach at a Christian school, I am respectful to the different denominations, and cultural practices of my students. The content in this unit is focused on representation, the stereotypes of Native Indigenous people, and suggestions that we change our perspective about Native Indigenous peoples as humans, as individuals.

The Navajo Nation Diné Standards were developed for primarily Navajo students, and I teach in a school that enrolls over 75% Navajo students; but, I also serve students who are non-Navajo

and have not been raised in the Navajo culture. When I use these standards, I slightly modify them to address the students of different background, and even Navajo students who were raised primarily as Christians with little to no influence to Navajo culture.

- Oral Diné Language Standards: 9th-12th: I will develop an understanding of the Diné Way of life.
 - Concept 1: I will recognize and value my thoughts and personality.
 - I will apply and practice what I have learned about self-respect and awareness

One of the standards I utilize in my unit is from the *Oral Diné Language Standards*: Concept 1, I will recognize and value my thoughts and personality; I will apply and practice what I have learned about self-respect and awareness. Since this is based on speaking, I relate this to speaking with other people in small and large group discussions, and in their final presentation which will include sharing their photo essay with classmates and community members. When students share their ideas, opinions, and viewpoints, they will show respect for self and the product they have created. The goal is that students will reflect on their personal experiences, their connections to the materials and themes in the unit, and honor their viewpoints.

- 9-12 Diné Character Building Standards: I will develop and apply critical thinking to establish relationships with the environment.
 - Concept 2: I will maintain the sacredness of self-identity
 - PO2: I will show value of who I am through Diné teachings
 - Concept 3: I will have self-respect
 - PO3: I will express my compassion and acknowledge all.
 - Concept 4: I will express gratitude in everything.
 - PO3: I will demonstrate ways to honor the Diné culture;
 - PO4: I will express and be grateful for cultural wisdom.

Character building is essential at this time in education, as the pandemic shut-down and remote learning had a big impact on student behavior. Remote learning from home allowed students to disconnect even from an online class, and to not deal with other people. Upon the return to in-school instruction, students are developing stamina for long periods of time in class and to deal with other students. It seems one would easily get back into the swing of things, but readjusting to in-person classes has meant practicing acceptable social behaviors, along with new guidelines like wearing masks, and trying to maintain social distance. Maintaining social distance has been a challenge for the class size.

So the character building standard, “I will express my compassion and acknowledge all,” is one that will be ongoing as we work on collaboration and discussion. The theme in the essay is focused on understanding storytelling through photographs, which requires that students analyze the photographs, gain background knowledge, and reflect on the lives of people. The goal is that students will then apply those skills to their own lives - in which they become aware or more sensitive to their identity, their fellow students, and their community members.

The fourth concept, “I will express gratitude in everything,” is a standard that is focused on expression, showing gratitude, and it opens the interpretation for “everything.” I assume that gratitude is in the environment, relationship, and community. My students will honor Diné culture, by sharing a presentation in which they reflect and share their personal experience and perspective in the final assessment. I will ask that they honor their respective cultures and communities by acknowledging those who have inspired them or influenced their lives. Critically thinking about their relationships and connections in a photo essay will illustrate what is important to them, and how they are affected by the places, people, and media around them.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

The reading standards will focus on informational text, even though I will incorporate some poetry and prose, the unit focus is on a speech written by Thomas King. The speech is delivered as an argument text about the impact of historical photographs of Native Indigenous people authenticity, stereotypes, and racism. Thomas King’s begins with a claim, with evidence, counter arguments, concessions, rebuttals, and a conclusion. Students will determine the central idea, and analyze the supporting evidence by identifying the types of appeals, rhetorical techniques, and final conclusion.

The supporting evidence and background information requires much focus on vocabulary terms and phrases, and research about the people he references, such as Edward Curtis, Richard Throssel, Will Rogers, and the American Romantic Literary period. Because the speech is focused on photography, there will be several opportunities for students to review and analyze the photographs as a different media to also review the references Thomas King incorporates as evidence. The first part of the unit will focus on reaching, listening, and gathering information about the references.

As students become familiar with the background information, I will incorporate more discussions as they form their opinions about the claim and the evidence utilized. I want students to make connections to modern day life in their discussions. The standard for listening and speaking notes that students will understand the content by having notes and other resources to develop their opinions and to support their opinions with the researched information and text. Students will also create a final project in which they write an essay with a photograph portfolio about their identity as modern Native Indigenous people who have a say in portraying and representing themselves. Because my classes are mixed with students who are non-Native Indigenous, the final project will equally apply to their creating a project about their personal identity. I want students to present their projects in a brief presentation. The final project also includes writing a response - the response can be an argument, or a narrative reflection, or a creative writing piece. We will review the writing process, and the editing process to revise and polish their final writing responses.

Reading Standards for Informational Text 6-12
RI: Key Ideas and Details

- *Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.*
- *Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connection that are drawn between them.*

RI: Craft and Structure (Grades 9-10)

- *Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.*

RI: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (Grades 9-10)

- *Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account).*

Writing Standards (9-10): Write informative /explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

- Introduce a topic; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting, graphics, and multimedia which useful to aiding in comprehension;
- Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic;
- Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing;
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topics).

Production and distribution of Writing (Grades 9-10)

- *Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*
- *Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.*

Speaking and Listening Standards (Grades 9-10)

- *Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.*

- *Come to discussion prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on the preparation by referring to evidence from texts, and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.*
- *Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source.*

Resources

- Charleyboy, L. & Leatherdale, M.B. (Eds.). (2016). Salish Geek - the mega-talented artist and designer Jeffrey Veregge. *Dreaming in Indian: Contemporary Native American Voices*. (pp. 106-108).
- Cunningham, F. (2017). I Am Not Your Princess. In Charleyboy, L. & Leatherdale, M.B. (Eds.). *A conversation with a massage therapist. #NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Woman*. (pp. 59).
- Common Core State Standards Initiative. (2021). *English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects Standards*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/ELA_Standards1.pdf
- Deer, J. (2017). I Am Not Your Princess. In Charleyboy, L. & Leatherdale, M.B. (Eds.). *We are not a costume. #NotYourPrincess: Voices of Native American Woman*. (pp. 61).
- Harmon, B. (1903-1942). Archives: society of Alberta. *Indians playing golf*. [photograph]. <http://albertaonrecord.ca/is-whyte-5142>
- King, T. (n.d.). Dead Dog Cafe. Dead Dog Cafe.com. <https://www.deaddogcafe.com/medicine-river-photographic-expedition>
- King, T. (2003). *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Navajo Nation Department of Education. (2021). *9th-12th Grade Diné Character Building Standards*. Retrieved from: https://www.navajonationdode.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/9_12DinéCharacter.expert.8.19.12_2.pdf
- Navajo Nation Department of Education. (2021). *9th-12th Oral Diné Language Standards*. Retrieved from: https://www.navajonationdode.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/9_12_Oral_Diné_Language.Approv.Ex_..._3.pdf
- Rogers State University Public Television. (2020, November 30). *Will Rogers and American Politics*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fa4qwBZEWo>
- Meier, A. (2018). Edward S. Curtis: Romance v. Reality. JSTOR Daily. <https://daily.jstor.org/edward-s-curtis-romance-vs-reality/>

Salgado, E.C. (2008-2021). Antique hand-colored postcard of Sherman Institute, Riverside, California. https://www.californiaindianeducation.org/indian_boarding_schools/

WDSE WRPT - PBS. (2013). Edward Curtis Photography Exhibit. Native Report Season 8 Episode 13, Segment 1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6lJs9alzjM>