

Native American Music from Wounded Knee to the Billboard Charts: A Document Based Exploration

OVERVIEW

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

In what ways did the music of Native Americans mark them as outsiders from the developing narratives of “American-ness” in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and how did the federal government attempt to use music as a tool to force assimilation?



OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students are introduced first to Pat Vegas and Redbone by way of interviews and music from RUMBLE. They then look back to the late 19th century to consider the significance of Redbone’s success. Students will use clips from the film, as well as a set of seven source documents to assess the U.S. government’s attempt to control Native American populations by way of culture, particularly music. The documents, which include letters, acts of Congress, testimony, and newspaper articles, introduce students to legislation and the Federal Indian Boarding School system from the perspectives of both government agents and Native Americans. Additionally, students analyze three poems that speak to the trauma Native Americans have experienced due to such governmental policies.

To a present-day listener with no additional context, Redbone’s single “Come and Get Your Love” may just sound like a classic mid-70s Rock tune. The song, which many might recognize from the opening sequence of the film *Guardians of the Galaxy*, is marked by a tight and funky drumbeat, as were many in that post-James Brown and Sly and the Family Stone moment. It’s harmony is punctuated by a punchy, dry bass line that contrasts with lush, rather deep-in-the-mix string overdubs. The sparse, repeated lyrics are not what many would call “deep.” “Come and Get Your Love,” however, is in many ways a breakthrough track.

When “Come and Get Your Love” broke the Billboard Top 5 singles in 1974, and when the track went “Gold,” meaning it sold at least half a million copies, it marked the first time an outwardly Native American ensemble had reached such heights.

Pat and Lolly Vegas, the Yaqui, Shoshone, and Mexican American brothers who founded Redbone in 1969, hadn’t always been “outwardly” Native American in performance. In the early 1960s, the brothers began their professional careers playing “Surf” music in Los Angeles. They recognized that their family surname, “Vasquez,” would mark them as Mexican-American and limit their potential. So, the Vegas brothers were born. However, as national attitudes toward identity and ethnicity began to evolve later in the decade, the Vegas brothers decided

OVERVIEW (CONTINUED)

to take the advice of part-Cherokee friend Jimi Hendrix and, as Pat Vegas puts it, “do the Indian thing.” Redbone performed in Native American clothing, and also worked traditional drum, dance, and song into performances, even on TV.

Redbone’s success came less than a century after the U.S. government banned traditional expressions of Native American song and dance, and 84 years after the Massacre at Wounded Knee, where U.S. forces murdered between two- and three-hundred Lakota men, women, and children, ostensibly because they refused to cease performing a pan-tribal ritual known as the “Ghost Dance.”

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, students will:

1. KNOW (KNOWLEDGE):

- The history of the Massacre at Wounded Knee from several perspectives
- About the Dawes Act
- About the Carlisle Indian Boarding School and Federal Indian schools of the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Firsthand accounts of students’ experiences at Federal Indian Schools
- About Col. Richard Pratt and the movement to “civilize” Native Americans during the period
- About mainstream white feelings toward to the music culture of Native Americans
- About Pat and Lolly Vegas (Vasquez) and their band Redbone
- How the trauma of those acts continues to affect the lives of Indigenous People today by examining poetry written by Native Americans

2. MASTERY OBJECTIVE:

- Through analysis of source documents, students will be able to discuss how attitudes toward Native American culture impacted the events at Wounded Knee, and apply their historical perspective to interpret the success of Native American popular music later in the 20th century.

ACTIVITIES

MOTIVATIONAL ACTIVITY:

1. Ask students:

- Can you think of any times music feels like more than entertainment to you? When it might say something about who you are? (*Encourage students to think of how music functions in rituals from religion, to “The Star-Spangled Banner,” to the singing of “Happy Birthday.” Also have students consider how music plays a role in shaping identity, e.g. “I’m a metalhead.”*)

PROCEDURE:

1. Tell your students that they will now watch a clip featuring Pat Vegas, a Yaqui, Shoshone, and Mexican American musician whose band Redbone became the first Native American group to have a Gold (more than half-a-million sold) record in 1974. Show **Clip 1, “Do the Indian Thing.”** Ask students:

- What do you think Jimi Hendrix meant when he told Pat Vegas to “do the Indian thing”? Why do you think Pat Vegas might have chosen to downplay or hide his heritage before Redbone?
- What do you think David Fricke might mean when he says, “ultimately, getting through is the best revenge?” In what ways did Redbone “get through”?

2. Have students make a T-chart on which each side represents one of the Redbone performances (the “traditional” and the Rock and Roll) in Clip 1. Play **Clip 1a, “Redbone Chant,”** and then play **Clip 1b, “Come and Get Your Love,”** and have students record their answers to the following questions on the T-Chart for each performance, then discuss their answers as a class:

- What instruments are being used?
- How would you describe the singing?
- How would you describe the dancing?
- Do you notice any similarities between the two clips?

3. Show **Clip 2, “The Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee,”** and ask students:

- Why do you think Native American music was seen as “dangerous” and a “threat” by U.S. officials? What

power do you think they might have believed Native American music had? (*Encourage students to consider the power music has to create a collective identity, how many Native Americans could say “our music” as a way of being apart from the white power structure, and what collective tribal identity might have represented to those who wished to control the tribes.*)

- In this clip, John Trudell suggests that the government agents wished to completely erase Native American culture, so “of course they came after our music.” Why do you think he feels so sure that controlling music was a way for the government to control the people? (*Among many things, encourage students to explore the idea that many songs were “songs of ancestors” and parts of oral history; ending the songs could destroy the connections to history.*)
- How do you think an event such as the Massacre at Wounded Knee might impact the practice of traditional song and dance among other tribes in what is today the United States?

4. Tell students they will now respond to a Document Based Question using seven source documents from the period of Wounded Knee. These documents are found in four handouts:

- **Handout 1 - Document 1: Excerpts from Richard H. Pratt, “The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites”**
- **Handout 2 - Documents 2 and 3: Native American Students Write Letters Home from Boarding School**

- **Handout 3 - Document 4: The Dawes Act**
- **Handout 4 - Documents 5-7: Assorted Accounts on Wounded Knee**

5. These documents could be assigned as an in-class group project, as an in-class individual project, or as a homework assignment. The documents could also be used to guide a document-based class discussion guided by the following question:

- To what extent did the U.S. government seek to use culture to control Native Americans in the late 19th century? Using examples from the documents, characterize the philosophical underpinnings of these measures, i.e., were they “for good,” or callous, etc? In what ways do you think these measures contributed to the Massacre at Wounded Knee? Why?

6. Tell students that the cruel and discriminatory policies that banned cultural and spiritual expressions of Native life and that removed Native Children from

their tribal homes to send them to faraway boarding schools have resulted in deep trauma among Indigenous People in what is today the United States. Pass out **Handout 5 - Three Poems by Indigenous Writers**. Ask students to read each of the poems in groups individually, or aloud as a class. Then ask students:

- What is similar about these three poems?
- Each poem offers a different perspective. What sort of character is speaking in each poem? What is their relationship with the Indian School?
- What imagery is used to describe indigenous culture in the three poems? What imagery is used to describe white “western” culture?
- How is repetition used in the poems? What effect might it have?
- In what ways might these three poems speak to how Native Americans experienced trauma in these Indian Schools?

SUMMARY ACTIVITY

1. Ask students:

- Considering what you know now about responses to Native American music in the United States, how would you assess the significance of the Redbone clip that began this lesson?
- Can you think of any other elements of culture that have moved from a marginal or forbidden position within society to one of acceptance? Can you think of anything that is currently marginal which you believe will someday be accepted?

EXTENSION ACTIVITY

1. The seven documents included in this lesson demonstrate a concerted effort on the part of the U.S. government to attempt to “civilize” Native Americans by forcing them to adopt a Euro-centric approach to all facets of life. In a short essay, use the included documents, and external resources if necessary, to explore other facets of Native American life that the U.S. government attempted to change with legislation and intervention.

STANDARDS

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading (K-12)

Reading 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Reading 2: Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

Craft and Structure 4: Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

Reading 6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

Reading 8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

Reading 9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity 10: Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing (K-12)

Writing 1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Writing 7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Writing 9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening (K-12)

Speaking and Listening 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Speaking and Listening 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SOCIAL STUDIES – NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS)

Theme 1: Culture

Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change

Theme 4: Individual Development and Identity

Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Theme 9: Global Connections Theme 6: Power, Authority, and Governance

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

Core Music Standard: Responding

Analyze: Analyze how the structure and context of varied musical works inform the response.

Interpret: Support interpretations of musical works that reflect creators' and/or performers' expressive intent.

Evaluate: Support evaluations of musical works and performances based on analysis, interpretation, and established criteria.

Core Music Standard: Connecting

Connecting 11: Relate musical ideas and works to varied contexts and daily life to deepen understanding.

NEW JERSEY STATE LEARNING STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Reading

NJSLSA.R1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

NJSLSA.R6: Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

NJSLSA.R8: Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

NJSLSA.R9: Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to

build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

Writing

NJSLSA.W1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

NJSLSA.W7: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects, utilizing an inquiry-based research process, based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

NJSLSA.W9: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

RESOURCES

VIDEO RESOURCES

- Rumble – Do The Indian Thing
- Rumble – Redbone Chant
- Rumble – Come and Get Your Love
- Rumble – The Ghost Dance and Wounded Knee

HANDOUTS

- Handout 1 - “Document 1: Excerpts from Richard H. Pratt, ‘The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites’”
- Handout 2 - “Documents 2 and 3: Native American Students Write Letters Home from Boarding School”
- Handout 3 - “Document 4: The Dawes Act Excerpts”
- Handout 4 - “Document 5: “Newspaper Stories Published in the Days Before and After the Massacre at Wounded Knee/ Survivor’s Testimony”
- Handout 5 - Three Poems by Indigenous Writers

Lesson Materials





Document 1 - Excerpts from Richard H. Pratt, "The Advantages of Mingling Indians with Whites."

Published in, *Americanizing the American Indians: Writings by the "Friends of the Indian," 1880–1900* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1973), 260–271.

Beginning in the late 19th century, the U.S. Government actively attempted to force Native Americans to participate in a program of "assimilation through education." Federal-run day and boarding schools, such as the Carlisle Indian School, founded by Col. Richard Pratt, were established both inside reservations and beyond their borders. Many young Native Americans were required to attend these schools. Between the 1890s and 1920s, thousands of young Native Americans attended such schools as far as 1,500 miles from their homes. Some attended willingly, however, many were forcibly removed from their families and required to attend.

Once enrolled, the process of "assimilation" was pursued through a systematic denigration and suppression of Native American culture. Students' hair was cut, their traditional clothing was confiscated, they were required to speak only English, and their musical traditions, considered "savage" by most whites, were forbidden. The letter below was published by Carlisle founder Col. Richard Pratt.

Col. Richard Pratt:

A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one ... In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.

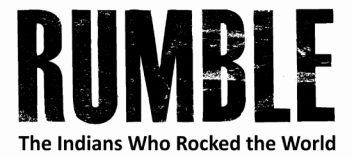
It is a sad day for the Indians when they fall under the assaults of our troops...but a far sadder day is it for them when they fall under the baneful influences of a treaty agreement with the United States whereby they are to receive large annuities, and to be protected on reservations, and held apart from all association with the best of our civilization. The destruction is not so speedy, but it is far more general.



Col. Richard Pratt

Inscrutable are the ways of Providence. Horrible as were the experiences of its introduction, and of slavery itself, there was concealed in them the greatest blessing that ever came to the Negro race—seven millions of blacks from cannibalism in darkest Africa to citizenship in free and enlightened America; not full, not complete citizenship, but possible—probable—citizenship, and on the highway and near to it.

The Indians under our care remained savage, because forced back upon themselves and away from association with English-speaking and civilized people, and because of our savage example and treatment of them... We have never made any attempt to civilize them with the idea of taking them into the nation, and all of our policies have been against citizenizing and absorbing them.



It is a great mistake to think that the Indian is born an inevitable savage. He is born a blank, like all the rest of us. Left in the surroundings of savagery, he grows to possess a savage language, superstition, and life. We, left in the surroundings of civilization, grow to possess a civilized language, life, and purpose. Transfer the infant white to the savage surroundings, he will grow to possess a savage language, superstition, and habit. Transfer the savage-born infant to the surroundings of civilization, and he will grow to possess a civilized language and habit... those advanced in life, even to maturity, of either class, lose already acquired qualities belonging to the side of their birth, and gradually take on those of the side to which they have been transferred.

The school at Carlisle is an attempt on the part of the government to do this. Carlisle has always planted treason to the tribe and loyalty to the nation at large. It has preached against colonizing Indians, and in favor of individualizing them. It has demanded for them the same multiplicity of chances which all others in the country enjoy. Carlisle fills young Indians with the spirit of loyalty to the stars and stripes, and then moves them out into our communities to show by their conduct and ability that the Indian is no different from the white or the colored, that he has the inalienable right to liberty and opportunity that the white and the negro have.



Carlisle Students, Before and After



Handout 2 - "Documents 2 and 3 - Native American Students Write Letters Home from Boarding School"

Document 2 - Excerpt from School Days of an Indian Girl

Late in the morning, my friend Judéwin gave me a terrible warning. Judéwin know a few words of English; and she had overheard the paleface woman talk about cutting our long, heavy hair. Our mothers had taught us that only unskilled warriors who were captured had their hair shingled by the enemy. Among our people, short hair was worn by mourners, and shingled hair by cowards!

I resisted by kicking and scratching wildly. In spite of myself, I was carried downstairs and tied fast in a chair.

I cried aloud, shaking my head all the while until I felt the cold blades of the scissors against my neck, and heard them gnaw off one of my thick braids. Then I lost my spirit.... In my anguish I moaned for my mother, but no one came to comfort me. Not a soul reasoned quietly with me, as my own mother used to do; for now I was only one of many little animals driven by a herder.

Document 3 - Letter from Harry Shirley (Caddo Tribe) to His Father, September 1882, from "Carlisle Indian Industrial School History." Barbara Landis, 1996.

My Dear Father: - I thought I would write you a few lines and I like the place very much... and we have a very nice farm and cold water to drink and would send my Bow and arrows and how is my little pony getting along I would like to know how are you getting and would please send me some money and we have a great many boy and is great many girls and the boys have a small house I wish they play the band and I have a bed to myself. And I am coming home in two years from now if Capt. Pratt will let me and how are you getting along with the big house and will you tell me in your letter when you write and we got at Carlisle on Thursday and when we got here I did not like the place but since I have being here two or three days I have got used to the place and I like very well but when we got I felt very home sick and be sure and send my bow and some spike arrows. And we go to church every Sunday. And I have a blue suit to where and there was one Shyenne boy shot himself with a pistol... the boys have a nice green lawn in which play Kicking a football and how are you getting along with your stock."



Student Tom Torlino, "Before and After"



Handout 3 - "Document 4 - The Dawes Act Excerpts"

Many within the Federal Government believed that the communal lifestyles of Native Americans was preventing them from becoming "true" Americans. The General Allotment Act, also referred to as The Dawes Act after Henry Dawes, the Massachusetts Senator who sponsored it, divided the shared land of reservations and granted it back in measured lots to the individual Native Americans of those tribes. The Dawes Act granted the government permission to seize and sell reservation lots to settlers as well. The allotment process was overseen by government agents given broad power to withhold land based on included language dictating the requirement of "the habits of civilized life."

Excerpts of the Dawes Act

Forty-Ninth Congress of the United States of America;

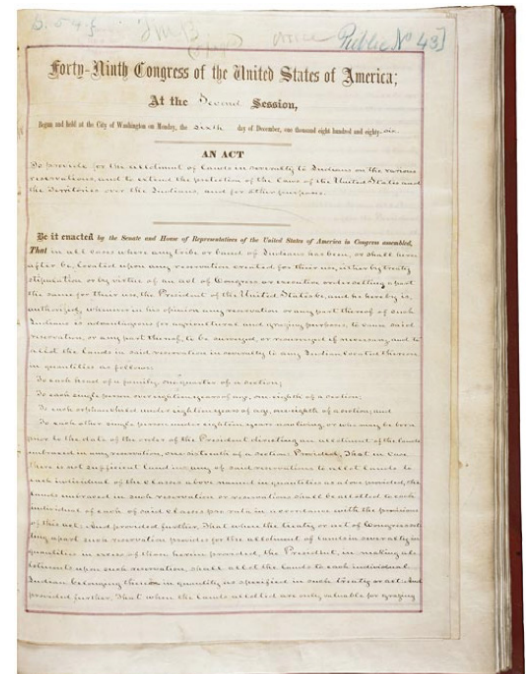
At the Second Session, begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the sixth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six.

An Act to provide for the allotment of lands in severalty to Indians on the various reservations, and to extend the protection of the laws of the United States and the Territories over the Indians, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That in all cases where any tribe or band of Indians has been, or shall hereafter be, located upon any reservation created for their use, either by treaty stipulation or by virtue of an act of Congress or executive order setting apart the same for their use, the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, authorized, whenever in his opinion any reservation or any part thereof of such Indians is advantageous for agricultural and grazing purposes, to cause said reservation, or any part thereof, to be surveyed, or resurveyed if necessary, and to allot the lands in said reservation in severalty to any Indian located thereon.

Sec. 3. That the allotments provided for in this act shall be made by special agents appointed by the President for such purpose, and the agents in charge of the respective reservations on which the allotments are directed to be made, under such rules and regulations as the Secretary of the Interior may from time to time prescribe, and shall be certified by such agents to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Sec. 6. Every Indian ... to whom allotments shall have been made under the provisions of this act ... who has voluntarily taken up, within said limits, his residence separate and apart from any tribe of Indians therein, and has adopted the habits of civilized life, is hereby declared to be a citizen of the United States, and is entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of such citizens, whether said Indian has been or not, by birth or otherwise, a member of any tribe



The Dawes Act



of Indians within the territorial limits of the United States without in any manner affecting the right of any such Indian to tribal or other property.

Sec. 10. That nothing in this act contained shall be so construed to affect the right and power of Congress to grant the right of way through any lands granted to an Indian, or a tribe of Indians, for railroads or other highways, or telegraph lines, for the public use, or condemn such lands to public uses, upon making just compensation.

Approved, February, 8, 1887.

Document from Ourdocs.gov, transcription courtesy of the Avalon Project at Yale Law School.



Handout 4 - "Documents 5-7: Newspaper Stories Published in the Days Before and After The Massacre at Wounded Knee / Survivor's Testimony"

One of the most actively suppressed expressions of Native American culture during the late 19th and early 20th centuries was music. The various forms of singing, drumming, and dancing associated with different tribes were considered "savage" by many of the white men in powerful positions in the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Traditional musical practices were banned, and non-compliance was often used as a reason to withhold land and rations to Native Americans as part of various treaties and acts of Congress bearing language regarding "habits of civilized life."

The "Ghost Dance" was not an "ancient" tradition. Rather, it emerged during the late 19th century as part of a pan-tribal religious movement. Many of the participants believed that the dance would unite Native Americans and drive out colonists. Some even believed it would make them impervious to bullets.



On December 28, 1890, two bands of Lakota--known to be peaceful, even by local military officers--were surrounded by the U.S. 7th Cavalry. The 7th Cavalry was tasked with disarming all members of the Lakota, who were rumored to have embraced the Ghost Dance. They marched the Lakota five miles and then ordered them to set up camp. They encircled the camp and set up four Hotchkiss "mountain guns," capable of firing two-pound rounds up to 3500 yards. The following morning a small skirmish, often reported to have begun when an elder Lakota began dancing, set off a melee during which 200-300 Native Americans, mostly women and children, and twenty-five U.S. troops were killed. Many of the U.S. troops are thought to have died from "friendly" Hotchkiss fire. Several of the soldiers involved in what was first called "The Battle at Wounded Knee," but has since been deemed a "Massacre," were awarded Medals of Honor which still stand.

The newspaper excerpts and testimony below, published the month before and a few days after The Massacre at Wounded Knee, show white perspectives and their consequences.



Document 5 - Daily Tobacco Leaf-Chronicle, November 22, 1890.

Indians Continue to Indulge in the Ghost Dance.

Bloodshed the Only Thing That Will Stop Them.

Agent Boyer Says the Hostiles Have Plenty of Ammunition and Will Use It.

THE GHOST DANCE Still Goes On

Omaha, Nov. 22. An Indian at Wounded Knee gives the information which has caused the agents to put on a more serious look. Coming in Thursday afternoon he reported that the Hostiles at Wounded Knee were still carrying on their dances and that they had heard of the arrival of the military, but what is of much more importance to the agents is they have strapped on their guns and are dancing fully armed. They declare they will meet the soldiers and will not hesitate to go into battle with them. Reports relative to the Indians declaring their willingness to fight for their religious craze have come in frequently, but up to this point are simply rumors. This information comes direct, however, from a source which Agent Boyer pronounces trustworthy ...

Said Mr. Boyer ... "It is not worth while to deny further that the trouble is imminent. Everyone of these hostiles is heavily loaded with ammunition and they will use it, I have been among them before ... Bloodshed is all that will stop them now."

[Interviewer] "That applies to stopping the dances"?

"Yes sir, they must, be stopped, and soon."

Agent Boyer computes the actual number of able-bodied men who are prepared to fight who are thoroughly armed at 600. The squaws, who are by no means a trivial factor in the fight, of course stretch that number away out.



RUMBLE
The Indians Who Rocked the World



Document 6 - Bismarck Tribune Weekly, Jan 2, 1891

A Fight With Hostiles.

GENERAL MILES TO COLONEL CORBIN.

CHICAGO, Dec. 29.

Colonel Forsythe reports that while disarming Big Foot's band a fight occurred ... This again complicates the surrender of all the Indians, which would have taken place in a short time had this not occurred. Forsythe had two battalions and Hotchkiss guns.

CONFLICT AT LAST.

While Disarming Big Foot's Band of Hostiles, a Disastrous Fight Occurs.

Captain Wallace of the Seventh Cavalry Killed, and Lieutenant Garlington Wounded.

Five Other Soldiers Killed and Fifteen Wounded in the Conflict.

Pine Ridge Greatly Excited, but Colonel Forsythe Believes the Worst is over.

Members of the Seventh Cavalry Again Show Themselves to be Heroes.

Captain Wallace Met His Death by a Blow on the Head by a War Club.

General Brooke reports: "The Indians are being hunted up in all directions. None are known to have gotten their ponies."

Troops were massed around the village and Hotchkiss guns [were] overlooking the camp not fifty yards away. Colonel Forsythe ordered all the Indians to come forward and away from their tents. They came and sat in a half circle until counted. The dismounted troops were then thrown around them ... The order was then given to twenty Indians to go and get their arms. Upon returning it was seen that only two guns were had and detachments at once began to search the village, resulting in thirty-eight guns being found ... All of a sudden they threw their hands to the ground and began firing rapidly at the troops, not twenty feet away. The troops were at a disadvantage, fearing the shooting of their own comrades. Indian men, women and children then ran to the south ... firing rapidly as they ran. Soon the mounted troops were after then shooting them down on every side. The engagement lasted fully an hour and a half. Just now it is impossible to state the exact number of dead Indians. Many more than fifty, however, were killed outright. The soldiers are shooting Indians down wherever found, no quarter being given by anyone.... It is doubted that before night neither a buck or squaw out of all of Big Footed band will be left to tell the tale of this day's treachery. Members of the Seventh cavalry have once more shown themselves to be heroes in deeds of daring.



Document 7 - From the Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1891, published in James Mooney, The Ghost-dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890, 14th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, Part 2 (1896), and PBS.org

WORSE AND WORSE

Sixty Dead Indian Men Were Counted on the Plain Where the Attempt Was Made

To Disarm Big Foot's Band and Where the Fight Began, and on Other

Parts of the Ground There Were 18 More Not Including Those Killed in the Ravines.

General Schofield Says he Thinks Miles Will be Master of the Situation Very Soon.

Besides Captain Wallace, 25 Men of the Seventh Cavalry and an Indian Scout Were Killed.

Forty Men Wounded, Many Severely —About 30 Wounded Indian Men, Women and Children.

When the Soldiers Were Ordered to Search the Tepees 120 Indians Turned Upon Them,

Below is testimony about the events at Wounded Knee from Lakota survivor American Horse.

The men were separated ... from the women, and they were surrounded by the soldiers. Then came next the village of the Indians and that was entirely surrounded by the soldiers also ... then they turned their guns, Hotchkiss guns, etc., upon the women who were in the lodges standing there under a flag of truce, and of course as soon as they were fired upon they fled, the men fleeing in one direction and the women running in two different directions. So that there were three general directions in which they took flight.

There was a woman with an infant in her arms who was killed as she almost touched the flag of truce, and the women and children of course were strewn all along the circular village until they were dispatched. Right near the flag of truce a mother was shot down with her infant; the child not knowing that its mother was dead was still nursing, and that especially was a very sad sight. The women as they were fleeing with their babes were killed together, shot right through, and the women who were very heavy with child were also killed. All the Indians fled in these three directions, and after most all of them had been killed a cry was made that all those who were not killed wounded should come forth and they would be safe. Little boys who were not wounded came out of their places of refuge, and as soon as they came in sight a number of soldiers surrounded them and butchered them there.



Handout 5 - Three Poems by Indigenous Writers

On Leaving My Children John and Jane at School, in the Atlantic States, and Preparing to Return to the Interior **Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (Ojibwe)**

Jane Johnston Schoolcraft (1800-1842) is considered to be the first known Native woman writer in the United States. Schoolcraft was the daughter of a Ojibwe mother and Scots-Irish Father. She began writing poetry at age fifteen, both in English and Ojibwemowin. Many of her poems were published in a magazine she coedited with her husband, Henry Schoolcraft.

Nii'aa nindinendam - Oh I am thinking
Mikawiyandin - I am found by you
Endanakiiyaan - My place of origin
Waasawagamig - A faraway place
Endanakiiyaan - My place of origin

Nindaanisens e - My little daughter
Ningwizisens e - My little son
Izhi-nagadawaad - Oh I leave them
waasawekamig - In a faraway place

Zhigwa gosha wi - Now
Beshowad e we - It is near
Nazhikeweyaan - I am alone
Izhi-izhayaan - As I go
Endanakiiyaan - My homeland

Endanakiiyaan - My homeland
Nazhikeweyaan - I am alone
Izhi-giiweyaan - I am going home
Nii'aa ningashkendam - Oh I am sad



Oh, Give Me Back My Bended Bow
William Walker Jr. (Häh-Shäh-Rêhs) (Wyandot)

William Walker Jr. (1800-1874) was the principal chief of the Wyandot tribe from 1835-1836, and the first provisional governor of Nebraska Territory. His work, which often spoke on the rights of the Wyandot, was widely published.

Oh, give me back my bended bow,
My cap and feather, give them back,
To chase o'er hill the mountain roe,
Or follow in the otter's track.

You took me from my native wild,
Where all was bright, and free and blest;
You said the Indian hunter's child
In classic halls and bowers should rest.

Long have I dwelt within these walls
And pored o'er ancient pages long.
I hate these antiquated halls;
I hate the Grecian poet's song.



Everything You Need to Know In Life You'll Learn in Boarding School
Linda Legarde Grover (Anishinaabe)

Linda Legarde Grover (1950-) is a writer from the Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe. In addition to writing works of poetry and fiction, she is the professor of American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota Duluth, where she researches the effects the Indian education policy has had on children and families.

Speak English. Forget the language of your grandparents. It is dead. Forget their teachings. They are unGodly and ignorant. Cleanliness is next to Godliness. Indians are not clean. Your parents did not teach you proper hygiene. Stay in line. This is a toothbrush. Hang it on the hook next to the others. Do not allow the bristles to touch. This spreads the disease that you bring to school from your families. Make your bed with mitered corners. A bed not properly made will be torn apart. Start over. Remember and be grateful that boarding school feeds and clothes you. Say grace before meals. In English. Don't cry. Crying never solves anything. Write home once every month. In English. Tell your parents that you are doing very well. You'll never amount to anything. Make the most of your opportunities. You'll never amount to anything. Answer when the teacher addresses you. In English. If your family insists and can provide transportation for you to visit home in the summer, report to the matron's office immediately upon your return. You will be allowed into the dormitory after you have been sanitized and de-loused. Busy hands are happy hands. Keep yourself occupied. You'll never amount to anything. Books are our friends. Reading is your key to the world. Forget the language of your grandparents. It is dead. If you are heard speaking it you will kneel on a navy bean for one hour. We will ask if you have learned your lesson. You will answer. In English. Spare the rod and spoil the child. We will not spare the rod. We will cut your hair. We will shame you. We will lock you in the basement. Learn from that. Improve yourself. You'll never amount to anything. Speak English.