

Film as a Medium for Teaching the Supporting Characters of the Civil Rights Movement

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Abstract

The lesson plans included in this unit will provide three extension units for supplemental learning incorporating film to teach the civil rights movement. The premise is to expand the African American civil rights movement as envisioned in the curriculum to include the movements of other minority groups. The lessons are also designed to meet the unique learning needs of English language learners at the high school level. Strategies are given to adapt the material to a diverse high school classroom.

Introduction

In December 2009, “news that Asian students were being viciously beaten within the halls of South Philadelphia High stunned the city”.¹ Many of the Asian students were my students. At the time of the riot, I was an English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher at South Philadelphia High School and had dealt with the constant bullying and violence against the immigrant students for years. The incident resulted in an investigation by the Justice Department in which it was determined that the school district and the administrators at South Philadelphia High School had acted with ‘deliberate indifference’ to the systemic violence that targeted mostly Asian students.² When the riot occurred, one of my Chinese students, Wei Chen, had learned in his U.S. History class that what was not legal in China was legal in the United States - organizing, protesting and that he had civil rights. The afternoon of the riot he made a phone call and reached out to various Asian American community organizations in Philadelphia for support. In the following weeks, backed by community support, students staged protests outside the school district administration building refusing to go back to the classroom until their demands for safer schools were met. In an interview after the school district was mandated to make changes, Wei Chen said, “We have the power to change; we can do something,” he said. “It’s not only adults who can do something, we can do something. I trust this.”³

Ten years later I continue to teach immigrant students and work with families who are not accepted and are referred to in academic literature as “the other”. The racial riot that occurred at South Philadelphia High School underscores what, in my humble opinion, is the belief that the immigrant or “other” population of

students are overlooked and underserved in the curriculum, in the classroom and in the broader scope top down policy making. This unit is intended as extension plans that will build on the textbook curriculum of major events of the Civil Rights Movement. By including ‘the other’ minority struggles, English Learners (ELs) will begin to understand and recognize discrimination, racism and to raise their awareness that they too can organize and advocate for themselves. It is also important for all students, ELs and native speakers, to gain alternative perspectives of “the other” and be aware of their civil liberties and rights.

Rationale

At the high school level, many classrooms in the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) include immigrant students with varying levels of English proficiency and formal education. I have learned over the years that many of ELs in the comprehensive high schools in Philadelphia have experienced significant trauma including human rights violations. I have had students who were human trafficked, been child soldiers, child laborers, could not afford school fees or as young girls missed school to take care of siblings. At the present moment I have families fleeing violence from Central America, refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and students whose families are economic immigrants simply looking for a better education, jobs, healthcare and futures for their children. What is always so surprising is the high school ELs’ awareness of geopolitics. Regrettably, their ability to understand government corruption and injustices stems from the fact that they have experienced some of the worst policies and injustices that have been inflicted on fellow men, women and children.

This diversity within the classrooms at the high school level presents unique needs and challenges for both staff and students. The problem is twofold. With respect to the social studies curriculum the vast majority of ELs are not part of the dominant narrative of the African American civil rights struggle that is represented in the textbooks. In other words, slavery in America, the Jim Crow South and segregation, to name a few topics in the curriculum, while imminently important in the context of living, learning and adapting to a new country and culture, are not directly connected to ELs. The SDPs curriculum for teaching civil rights at the secondary level covers very little of the civil rights struggles of other minority groups. The textbooks and the aligned scope and sequence curriculum focus almost solely on the major historical figures of the 1960s and the corresponding primary sources of those individuals. My experience teaching in various K-12 schools has seen a redundancy in the curriculum that spotlight Martin Luther King, Jr., Rosa Parks, Presidents Kennedy and President Johnson’s role in the civil rights movement, Malcolm X, The Black Panthers and other well-known historical figures. Primary sources for the instructional units include the

often-taught 'I Have a Dream' speech, John Lewis' Address at the March on Washington and Letter from a Birmingham Jail. As a result, the world imagined by the curriculum is a Black-White paradigm and does not acknowledge that many people who were involved in the civil rights movement have varied histories and agendas that are not acknowledged.

The second problem is the challenge of adapting content to make it comprehensible for ELs. A sheltered content class, with a certified ESOL teacher for ELs is not always possible, yet level 1, 2, and 3 ELs should have sheltered content classes with a dual certified ESOL teacher. A dual certified teacher has a teaching certificate in a specific content area such as social studies, math or science and a K-12 ESOL certification. Therefore, the diversity of students' language proficiency combined with a lack of adequate teacher training often result in a scenario in which the curriculum is not adapted and is incomprehensible for ELs. Research conducted by the University of Pennsylvania observed the following:

Students isolated at tables or in corners of the room, virtually left to their own devices to translate, most often in a group effort, their textbooks and related assignments. I saw these same students skipped over by their teachers with no explanation in group reading/assignments-sharing activities, and in the few when they were selected to speak with or read aloud to their native-speaking peers, I watched them struggle within the bounds of their extremely limited vocabulary and poor pronunciation skills, most often resulting in jeers and snickering among their classmates.⁴

This research, which provided damning testimony regarding pedagogy in a diverse classroom, along with recommendations from the Education Law Center, have made some progress by providing numerous professional development opportunities for the teaching staff in the School District of Philadelphia to meet some of the challenges. Adapting curriculum to meet the needs of diverse learners is time consuming. This teaching unit will help to meet the needs of both the learner and the teacher by providing needed curriculum materials that are comprehensible and meaningful.

Content Objectives

The content objectives of these lessons are not intended to diminish, in any way, the world imagined in the curriculum, but to broaden the scope of the civil rights movement and include those who do not fit into the Black/White paradigm of race. By extending the curriculum, immigrant students can understand that they also have civil rights and can find kinship and solidarity with other members of

the U.S. population who have faced and do face similar challenges. Therefore, this unit aims to add extension lessons that go beyond the African American civil rights movement and include the history of the Native American Indians in their struggle for self-determination to regain their land and heritage partially through education, the LGBTQ community and the events at Stonewall and finally the Asian American civil rights movement that grew out of the African American civil rights movement. This unit is meant to be a resource for any African American history or U.S. history class with strategies and activities to meet the unique learning needs of ELs. At the high school level, ELs have limited time to become proficient in English compared to their elementary school counterparts. Therefore, adapting content material is critical in order for them to learn new material as they are learning English. This unit will provide teachers with strategies and adapted materials needed for ELs using comprehensible input to explore minority movements in civil rights and all social studies teachers will have a unit using strategies to aid all learners. The final outcome for the unit will be for students to have a choice of projects. One project is to research local organizations that support immigrant, LGBTQ and Native Americans and create a resource for the school. Students choosing this project have the choice of making it a brochure for distribution to the wider community such as local libraries or as a digital resource for a school website. An alternative project would be for the students to make a podcast explaining why it is important to understand civil rights, giving examples from the lessons to teach others what they have learned.

Content Background

Native American Indian Movement

Beginning with the Native American boarding schools, students will learn about assimilation education. Using primary documents of pictures of Native American students from the Carlisle Boarding School that was located in Carlisle, Pennsylvania and the more recent We Will Remember Survival School, students will compare and contrast education as both a civil rights violation and as a form of activism to reclaim civil rights. Founded in 1879 and for thirty-nine years, The Carlisle Industrial Boarding School was a project to assimilate Native Americans into American culture.⁵ One of the founders is quoted as saying, “Kill the Indian, Save the Man.”⁶ It was a long held belief that these boarding schools would allow the Indians to survive. At the time, the founders of the school and the goal of the government believed in the savageness of the Native Americans and re-education was the best way to destroy their savageness. The boarding schools continued for approximately another 50 years. Historical records and eyewitness accounts attest to harsh discipline, conversion to Christianity, loss of language, loss of culture and most importantly broken families.⁷

The tragedy of the boarding schools came to an end in 1968 with the founding of the American Indian Movement (AIM), a Native American advocacy group, bringing attention to such issues as treaty rights, living conditions, and racism.⁸ Growing out of AIM was the desire to keep families together and to reclaim cultural heritage. Through the TIP seminar I was introduced to the We Will Remember Survival Schools in the film *Warrior Women*. The Survival Schools provided the antidote for the draconian practice of removing children from their families and placing them in residential boarding schools. As an educational institution for Native Americans The Survival Schools provided the opportunity for children and families to learn their cultural heritage. The Survival School was co-founded by Madonna Thunder Hawk in 1974 and there are numerous references and actual film footage of The Survival Schools in the documentary *Warrior Women*. In brief, Madonna Thunder Hawk was born and raised on a number of reservations in South Dakota and is a member of the Cheyenne River Sioux and was one of the founding members of AIM.⁹ The Survival Schools were Indian imagined, administered and taught by Native American Indians for “Indian youth whose parents were facing federal charges or who had been drop-outs or “push-outs” from the traditional educational system. This alternative home/school was part of the National Federation of Native-Controlled Survival Schools that was established during the movement as many alternative schools developed.”¹⁰

Stonewall

The background on Stonewall provides the foundation for examining the essential question - How does a civil rights movement get started? Historically, many members of the gay community in New York City, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community in the United States had lived underground, until the Stonewall Uprising. Stonewall provided the flashpoint for the beginning of a movement that came out from the shadows. Just about everywhere in America it was illegal to live openly as an LGBTQ person. In New York City, the police used archaic and even non-existent laws as a reason for an arrest. For example, a person could be arrested for not wearing three pieces of female clothing or wearing what is termed ‘costumed dress’ as preferred by crossdressers. The three pieces of female clothing policy was used by police “as an excuse for street-level sexual assault and sexual humiliation.”¹¹ On the 50th anniversary of Stonewall, I took a social justice walking tour in Greenwich Village guided by Jay Toole. Jay identifies as a super butch lesbian using the pronouns she/hers. She is featured as one of the eyewitnesses to the Stonewall Uprising in the online documentary *Stonewall*. During the tour she repeatedly spoke about the police raids and having endured repeated physical and sexual

assaults committed by the police. Jay also quipped amusingly about the three pieces of female clothing and wondered how the police could see through clothes to determine what anyone was wearing underneath!

Beginning in the 1960s, Stonewall opened as an illegal gay and lesbian bar owned by the Genovese crime family. It was described as a haven of refuge for gay patrons to socialize and be free to be themselves. The mob used Stonewall and other illegal gay and lesbian bars to launder money and of course to pay off the police. Every now and then the mob would have the police raid a bar to satisfy complaints from the local residents.¹² Interviews of patrons who were at Stonewall the night of the riot explained that the gay community had always run from the police. They ran because being arrested was mortifying and the police exerted unnecessary brutality.¹³ Yet on the night of June 28th, 1969, as the police began to raid Stonewall, for the first time the gay community fought back. It was a violent protest and riot that lasted for six days before the police finally backed off. It was the spark that ignited a movement. As such Stonewall can be contextualized with the nonviolent events in the film *Selma* for teaching how a movement starts. The Selma to Montgomery march was a much longer and more organized nonviolent movement for voting rights compared to years of oppression and degradation of the gay community who finally said enough is enough and someone threw a brick. To this day no one knows who threw the brick but it only took one to start the revolution.

In June, 2016, President Obama designated the location as a National Monument to honor the legacy of the LGBTQ movement for equality.¹⁴ This was the first for the LGBTQ community. While much has changed in the 50 years since Stonewall, many in the LGBTQ community continue the need to live a private life in their communities. In 2019, on the 50th Anniversary of Stonewall one CBS commentator stated, “You cannot legislate acceptance. If you are not accepted, you are not safe and you are not going to move through this world with the same rights no matter what.”¹⁵

Asian American Civil Rights Movement

The Asian American civil rights movement will provide another rather unique look at the birth of a movement by Japanese American human rights and civil rights activist, Yuri Kochiyama and her friendship with Malcolm X. Shortly after the bombing in Pearl Harbor in December of 1941, Kochiyama’s father was hospitalized for an operation. “He was the only Japanese in that hospital,”

Kochiyama recalls, “so they hung a sheet around him that said, ‘Prisoner of War.’”¹⁶ In 1943, Kochiyama and her family were removed to a Japanese internment camp as a result of President Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 that authorized the round up of thousands of Japanese Americans and Japanese resident aliens.¹⁷ At the time of her family’s relocation to an internment camp, Kochiyama was 21-years-old. She lived in the internment camp for three more years. As a result, she quickly became aware of racism and the struggle of oppression among ethnic minorities in the United States.¹⁸

Fast-forward to the 1960s and Kochiyama’s activism saw a parallel struggle with the black civil rights movement. She met Malcolm X in 1963 and became both a follower and a friend. From her friendship with one of the leading members of black civil rights movement she went on to become the founder of Asian Americans for Action. Her two-year friendship with Malcolm X ended when he was assassinated.¹⁹ The film *Malcolm X* was referenced numerous times in the TIP seminar and in doing research for this unit it was discovered that director Spike Lee took dramatic license in the assassination scene by having Malcolm X’s wife hold her husband’s head as he was dying. In actuality, newspapers across the country had a photograph of his violent ending and Yuri Kochiyama was holding his head.²⁰

Guidance from my TIP instructor suggested that it would be remiss if another woman civil rights activist was not included in the framework for teaching an Asian American civil rights unit and that would be Grace Lee Boggs. As an Asian American who graduated Barnard followed by a philosophy degree from Bryn Mawr, she became acutely aware of her difference as a Chinese American attending predominantly upper class white American colleges. After receiving her Ph.D., Ms. Boggs accepted a position in a philosophy library in Chicago where the only housing she could afford was in a rat-infested basement.²¹ In the PBS.org documentary *American Revolutionary: Meet Grace Lee Boggs*, one quickly comes to understand how she became a civil rights activist as the issues of poverty, racism and discrimination were no longer statistics to her, but had faces. I think it is important to teach the Asian American civil rights movement with film clips from the perspective of these two women when asking the questions - How does a movement get started? What events in a person’s life propel them to raise their voice for change? These questions takes me back to the introduction and the riot at South Philadelphia High School and the words of Wei Chen, “We have the power to change; we can do something,” he said. “It’s not only adults who can do something, we can do something. I trust this.”

Teaching Strategies to Support ELs

Graphic organizers help ELs to grasp new content as they learn new vocabulary. A visual representation of information makes new learning more accessible and comprehensible. KWL Charts, T-charts, maps and guided skeleton notes are just a few examples. The use of these handouts provide student engagement during class. When used as a partner activity, the use of graphic organizers increases student engagement and allows for conversation and the production of English as ELs collaborate.²²

Another strategy is the use of multimedia and visuals which support ELs for decoding and comprehension. When using multimedia, Movie Talk is a strategy for stopping and starting a movie or film clip in order to check on comprehension or to allow time for students to complete a graphic organizer.²³

Close reading is a requirement for Common Core State Standards and is another scaffold to increase comprehension. For ELs a close reading may begin with a picture. Consistently using sentence starters such as I see . . . I notice . . . This makes me wonder . . . I have a question about . . . will aid ELs with academic writing, language and structure that may be more advanced than their own writing. A close reading of short passages would involve reading for comprehension, rereading with a purpose followed by a third reading to question the text. There are various iterations for implementing close reading in a lesson plan, however with ELs it is useful to combine the strategy with a turn and talk strategy or complete the last step in a small group setting.

When introducing a new teaching strategy it is important to use another teaching strategy; modeling an example. Modeling the strategy provides the students a framework for how to proceed and a guideline for expectations and outcomes. Using a strategy such as turn-and-talk needs to be modeled and explicitly taught in order for it to be effective. Students should be given a prompt or question, quickly turn to their partner and have a minute or two discussion before sharing out with the class.

The use of transcripts while listening to a podcast or watching a film or video clip is a scaffold designed to support comprehension and to build ELs listening and reading skills. While it may seem time consuming to create a transcript many podcasts, Youtube videos and films provide transcripts online. In addition to having transcripts there is often the option of turning on foreign subtitles in the settings.

Extension Unit 1 Native American Civil Rights

Time Frame - Approximately three 55 minute periods

Day 1 Teaching Plan

Objective - Students will be able to (SWBAT) describe educational settings in order to (IOT) contextualize 'assimilation education' within civil rights

Standards - CC.1.2.9-10 - 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.

Standard - CC.8.5.9-10.I - Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. Students will be examining civil rights from the perspective of different sources.

Essential Question - How does education impact civil rights?

Materials Required - laptops, transcript of an interview with Sherman Alexie, movie clips, primary source images

Assessment - Using previously taught or already known background material students will write a one page opinion about the education they have received (in their country) or are currently receiving in the United States and if any aspects are a violation of their civil rights.

Classroom Activities Native American Civil Rights

Students will begin class by doing a quick write to unpack the essential question that is posted as a Do Now: How does education impact civil rights? Suggest the student's break down the question by asking questions such as: Whose education? What kind of education? What does impact mean? What could be the connection between civil rights and education? Students will do a turn and talk to share their answers and finally the whole class will share out their answers and the teacher will write various responses on large chart paper. Explain to the students that they will be completing a graphic organizer to compare and contrast images and a film clip of Native American schools. Students will then work independently to

complete a graphic organizer comparing and contrasting two Native American Indian schools. This can also be completed online using the Carlisle Indian School image and a movie clip and a still image from *Warrior Women* 36:39 - 37:07 students will complete the following graphic organizer in order to make inferences and to cite evidence. Students must use complete sentences and the use of sentence starters if necessary. Sentence starters such as I believe I say this because I also see . . .



Figure 1: An archival image of Native American students at the Carlisle Boarding School learning how to do laundry. Source: Johnston, F.B., photographer. (1901) *Laundry class, Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania*. Carlisle Pennsylvania, 1901. [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/98503026/>.



Figure 2: A still shot of Survival School from *Warrior Women as Native American* children learn about the earth or a movie clip beginning 36:39 to 37:07. Source: King, C. D., Castle, E. A., Pitman, A. Marie, Burgess, A., Larson, J. G., Deguchi, K., Nutile, K., Carmassi, G., & Scary, B. *Warrior women*.

Image #1	Image #2
1. What is going on in this picture? I see . . .	1. What is going on in the film clip? I see . . .
2. What do you see that makes you say that? (cite evidence) I say this because . . .	2. What do you see that makes you say that? (cite evidence) I say this because . . .
3. What more can you find?	3. What more can you find?

Adapted from Network, T. L. (2019, September 12). On-Demand Webinar: Use Photos to Practice Critical Thinking and Literacy Skills. Retrieved April 8, 2020, from <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/12/learning/sign-up-for-our-free-webinar-on-teaching-with-intriguing-photographs.html>

Students will share out what they believe is happening in the pictures. After the students have shared their ideas about the two visuals provide brief background support information on both visuals explaining that they are two different approaches to Native American education. Next, working with a partner, divide the class in half. Have one half read the history of the Carlisle Indian School and the other half read about Survival Schools. If the text is too difficult it can be copied and pasted to rewordify.com to lower the lexile level. Students will complete a T-Chart of the pros and cons of each school. Have partners transfer at least one pro or con to larger chart paper that is hung around the room.

Reading 1: In 1870, the United States government undertook a project aimed at assimilating Native American youth in mainstream American culture. Amid dire predictions of the “extinction” of Native American without complete and rapid integration, Civil War veteran, Lt. Col. Richard Henry Pratt spearheaded the effort to create an off-reservation boarding school. Pratt instituted a system of forced “Americanization,” abandonment of Native languages, required conversion to Christianity, and harsh military discipline, and headed north to create the Carlisle Indian Industrial School.

After Pratt convinced several influential tribal leaders to send their children with him to Pennsylvania, The Carlisle Indian Industrial School opened its doors as the nation’s first non-reservation boarding school. Pratt maintained his belief that the only hope for Native American survival was to shed all native culture and customs – thus Pratt’s refrain, “Kill the Indian, Save the Man.”

The complex history of Carlisle is both tragic and uplifting. While Pratt and his supporters felt they were acting out of benevolence, their belief that the young Indians needed to be stripped of the “savage” customs and culture ultimately deprived the students of their heritage. Disease and harsh conditions took their toll, and hundreds of children died, with 186 still buried on the site today.

But along with that trauma and tragedy, Carlisle gave students an opportunity to explore the world outside of the reservations they called home. The school fielded many highly regarded athletic teams, including baseball and football teams with icon Jim Thorpe. The internationally acclaimed Carlisle band performed at the Presidential inauguration of Theodore Roosevelt, and every other inauguration held during its operation. From the ranks of Carlisle alumni rose many noted activists and advocates who championed the cause of cultural preservation.

Retrieved from Carlisle Indian School Project. (n.d.). Retrieved April 19, 2020, from <https://222carlisleindianschoolproject.com/history/>

Reading 2: AIM's community schools were truly grassroots efforts. During their formative years, neither had a permanent location, with classes held in condemned buildings, basements, churches, and even a tent. Their lunch program depended on donated food stamps and classes were taught on a volunteer basis. Despite such depressing realities, AIM refused to abandon the project. Their perseverance ultimately paid off when they landed a series of federal grants, which led to permanent locations and improved programming. Besides basic academic curricula, the schools were able to offer a variety of cultural courses like canoe-making, tipi and wigwam construction, and wild rice-harvesting.

For over 30 years, the schools kept their doors open until a series of power struggles and funding misappropriations ultimately led to their demise. Davis, however, maintains that despite such blemishes AIM's community schools served as a beacon of hope and were tremendously successful in elevating graduation rates, revitalizing culture for urban Indians, and underscoring the need for education reform. Davis, who grew up on the Leech Lake reservation, offers a refreshing, if sympathetic portrait of an oft maligned organization. *Survival Schools* will no doubt change the discourse on AIM and Native activism for students of modern American Indian history and education.

Retrieved from Shreve, B. (2015, August 20). *Survival Schools: The American Indian Movement and Community Education in the Twin Cities*. Retrieved April 26, 2020, from <https://tribalcollegejournal.org/survival-schools-the-american-indian-movement-and-community-education-in-the-twin-cities/>

To end the class, have the students write an example of what 'assimilation education' is on a post-it note and place it a poster as they leave the class.

Day 2 Teaching Plan

Objective: SWBAT analyze hair styles in 'assimilation education' IOT make a cultural connection

Standard - CC.1.5.9-10.A - Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Standard - CC.1.5.9-10.E - Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks.

Essential Question - How does 'assimilation' education impact civil rights?

Materials needed: Movie clip, Movie Talk graphic organizer or a double entry journal graphic organizer, primary source image, Do Now sentence frames for a summary and an Exit Ticket.

Hand out a cloze paragraph with a word box for students to do a quick write briefly summarizing what they learned on day one as the Do Now. After five minutes have volunteers read their summaries. Proceed to a 10-minute whole class discussion using the following quote from Madonna Thunderhawk and focusing on the word 'assimilate', project or write the following quotation on the board. "There are those of us who are content to assimilate or whatever, but there are those of us who want to maintain the culture our ancestors died for . . . We have the right to be who we are." Madonna Thunder Hawk 2008. (Musgrave, 2018). Write the student ideas on the smart board or on chart paper. If students are slow to engage, then the teacher can ask some guiding questions such as; How do you maintain a culture? Why do they think they have the right to be who they are? Why are some Native Americans fine with assimilation and others are not? Next, proceed to another 10 minutes of discussion after displaying the photograph of the students at the Carlisle Indian School.



Retrieved from Library of Congress. (ca. 1890) Native American men and a boy posed outside of Carlisle Indian School. Carlisle Pennsylvania, ca. 1890. [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/99471846/>.

and compare it to the movie clip from *Warrior Women* from 14:18 to 14:52 as the women discuss hair braiding. Discuss the differences from the Carlisle Indian School and what the Native American women say about hair braiding. Continue the discussion about the importance of hairstyles. Ask guiding discussion questions such as; How are hairstyles part of someone's culture? Were you required to wear your hair a certain way for school in your country? What are some hairstyles you can connect to a culture? Is it appropriate to touch someone else's hair in your culture? Why or why not? Show the clip from *Warrior Women* from 13:00 to 13:47 and discuss why the Survival School felt like home and why any place else was not like home. Discuss if school should feel like home? If school doesn't feel like home what happens?

If the students have never used a double entry journal model, then provide explicit instructions to the students regarding how to complete the graphic organizer before they watch from the beginning to 5:00 of Part 1 of *Unseen Tears: The*

Native American Boarding School Experience in Western New York Part 1 .

Using a Movie Talk strategy and a graphic organizer with comprehension questions or simply a Double Entry Journal, the teacher will stop the documentary at designated points in order for the students to discuss and complete the graphic organizer. Be forewarned that this activity takes much longer than the 5:00 minute clip.

Movie Talk Graphic Organizer

Guiding questions:	
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- | | |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. 1:27 - What do you notice about the children's hair?2. 2:40 - Why did the schools get started?3. 3:03 - What did Pratt mean when he said "Kill the Indian to save the man"?4. 3:45 - Why do you think Sally General is called a survivor?5. 4:08 - Why didn't Geronimo Henry have any resentment until he got out of the residential boarding school?6. 4:40 - What was the impact of having all their hair cut off?7. What else did you hear or see in the film clip that surprised you? | |
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To end the class have the students complete an exit ticket answering the following question: In your opinion, why was there such a focus on cutting Native American Indian hair so it was uniform in the boarding schools?

Day 3 Classroom Activities

Objective: SWBAT close read the transcript of an interview IOT gain a semi-personal perspective on education from the Native American author Sherman Alexie.

Standard - CC.1.2.9-10 - 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. Students will use both print and multimedia in order to participate in discussions on the different agendas of different civil rights movements.

Standard - CC.8.5.9-10.I - Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. Students will be examining civil rights from the perspective of different sources.

Essential Question - How does education impact civil rights?

Materials Required - laptops, transcript of an interview with Sherman Alexie, movie clips, primary source images

At the beginning of class students will close read a picture and complete a graphic organizer.



Retrieved from the Library of Congress. Johnston, F. B., photographer. (1901) Laundry class, Carlisle Indian School, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Carlisle Pennsylvania, 1901. [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/98503026/>.

Image #1

1. What is going on in this picture? I see . . .
2. What do you see that makes you say that? (cite evidence)
I say this because . . .
3. What more can you find?

Have a few students share out what they wrote. Transition to pre-teaching vocabulary from the transcript: hydrocephalic, semi-autobiographical, nearsighted/farsighted, lopsided, rez, khakis, rural and dichotomy. After pre-teaching vocabulary, build background knowledge as necessary for students to understand why and what are Indian reservations. Have visuals prepared as a slide

presentation for the more difficult vocabulary such as lopsided, rez for reservation, khakis, etc. Students will close read the following excerpt of an interview with Native American author Sherman Alexie. If the text is too difficult for some students it can be copied and pasted into rewordify.com to lower the lexile level. On the first close read the students will read together for comprehension. They will make notes about any questions they have as they read. On the second read students will pull out the problems Arnold Spirit, Jr. has going to an all white high school off the reservation.

Speaker: "I was born with water on the brain." So begins the quirky new novel for young adults by writer Sherman Alexie. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* is the story of a boy from the Spokane Indian Reservation in Washington, Arnold Spirit, Jr, endures poverty and teasing from his peers, and he yearns for a better life. He was born hydrocephalic, with too much fluid in his head. The seizures that followed, added to a difficult childhood, a childhood Sherman Alexie knows well. The book is semi-autobiographical. Sherman Alexie also grew up on the Spokane Reservation. And like Arnold Spirit, Jr., made a decision to leave the reservation for an all white high school. Here's Alexie reading from the first chapter.

Sherman Alexie: "My brain damage left me nearsighted in one eye and farsighted in the other, so my ugly glasses were all lopsided, because my eyes were so lopsided. I get headaches because my eyes are like enemies, you know. Like they used to be married to each other, but now hate each other's guts. And I started wearing glasses when I was three, so I ran around the rez looking like a three-year-old Indian grandpa. And, oh, I was skinny. I'd turn sideways and disappear. But my hands and feet were huge. My feet were a size 11 in third grade. With my big feet and pencil body, I looked like a capital L walking down the road."

Speaker: Oh, no. So Arnold could've stayed on the reservation all his life. That was home. It was the only place he knew. What was it that propels him off the rez.

Sherman Alexie: The turning point in Arnold's life is the first day of eighth grade, when he opens up his math book and his mom's name is written in it, his mother's maiden name, which is a 30-year-old math book. The unfairness of that, of being poor and Indian and reservation bond, all of that comes together. And Arnold stands up

and throws his math book across the room and smashes the math teacher in the face, breaks his nose.

And you think that would cause all sorts of problems for him. Of course, it does. But one of the unexpected results is that the math teacher, Mr. P, comes in later with a bandaged face, and tells Junior that he has to leave the rez, that it's a trap. You know, that comes from my own personal beliefs, of course, that the reservation was created as a prison, as a rural concentration camp where Indians were supposed to disappear and die. I think largely, and Mr. P believes this too, it's still its function. And so Mr. P, the teacher, explains to Arnold that in order to have a good life, he has to go to a place where there's more hope.

Speaker 1: Arnold, the character, is an aspiring cartoonist, and there's some pretty funny cartoons throughout the book, actually done by illustrator Ellen Forney. There's one on page 57 that really sums up Arnold's first day of school. It's a split Arnold.

Sherman Alexie: Ah, yes. Arnold's split right down the middle. So the white side of him has the bright future, the Indian, the vanishing past. The white side has the Tommy Hilfiger khakis, and the Indian side is the Glad garbage book bag. And Arnold's wearing canvas tennis shoes purchased on aisle seven of Safeway Supermarket. And the white side has the latest Air Jordans. So it's just a very visual dichotomy between white wealth and Indian poverty.

Speaker 1: There is a tension in leaving the reservation, because when he walks away, he walks into this world 100%. And back home it's like you're an apple.

Sherman Alexie: Red on the outside, white on the inside. Yeah, so he ends up being split in between. He doesn't belong to the tribe anymore. He's sort of been banished in a way, self-banishment, I guess. So they call him an apple. They beat him up when they see him. They have lost all respect for him and they had very little to begin with.

For the last 15 minutes of class have the students watch one of the many interviews with Sherman Alexie that can be found online. To end the class have the students write about a personal connection they have with Sherman Alexie's experience in school.

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Appendix 1

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

Double-Entry Chart for Watching a Film

Directions: Use the chart below as you watch to record and consider the aspects that you find most important or interesting. First, on the left side, note a specific quote or detail from the film; next, on the right side, tell what you noticed about it, why you chose it, or what questions it raises for you.

Notable Quote or Detail From the Film	Your Observation, Comment or Question

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Appendix 2

The following is a list of both English language arts and social studies standards from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education.

CC.1.2.9-10 - 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. Students will use both print and

multimedia in order to participate in discussions on the different agendas of different civil rights movements.

CC.1.5.9-10.A - Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. This standard is particularly important for ELs. ELs are required to take a yearly standardized test to assess their proficiency in speaking and listening. This standard covers both language acquisition domains.

CC.1.5.9-10.E - Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks. Again, this standard is directed toward ELs using academic vocabulary and participating in academic discussions.

CC.8.5.9-10.I - Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources. Students will be examining civil rights from the perspective of different sources.

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