



# Mitchell Museum of the American Indian

## Deconstructing Stereotypes: Top Ten Truths

### Specific Strategies for Teacher Education

#### 1. Native peoples still exist and thrive.

- ✓ 5.2 million Native peoples live throughout the United States (4 million) and Canada (1.2 million)
- ✓ 565 United States federally recognized tribes and 600 Canadian First Nations groups

#### Background

Debbie Reese's blog, *American Indians in Children's Literature*, contains a wealth of information for educating yourself about current issues in teaching children about native peoples. <http://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

#### Strategies

**Book Reading:** Read books showing contemporary American Indian children to challenge common stereotypes. Ask students to describe the characters and if the stories have changed their views about Indian peoples.

- Children of LaLoche & Friends. (1990). *Byron through the Seasons*. Fifth House Ltd. (Grades: K-1).
- Harjo, Joy. (2000). *The Good Luck Cat*. Harcourt Brace (Grades: P-3).
- Hunter, Sara Hoagland. (1996). *The Unbreakable Code*. Northland (Grades: 2-3).
- Keeshig-Tobias, Lenore. (1991). *Bird Talk*. Sister Vision (Grades: P-K).
- Sanderson, Esther. (1990). *Two Pairs of Shoes*. Pemmican Publications (Grades: P-K).
- Smith, Cynthia. (2000). *Jingle Dancer*. Morrow Junior (Grades: P-3).
- Tapahonso, Luci. (1999). *Songs of Shiprock Fair*. Kiva (Grades: P-3).
- Waboose, Jan Bourdeau. (1998). *Morning on the Lake*. Kids Can Press (Grades P-3).
- Waboose, Jan Bourdeau. (2000). *Skysisters*. Kids Can Press (Grades P-3).
- Wheeler, Bernelda. (1995). *Where Did You Get Your Moccasins?* Peguis Publications (Grades: P-K).

**Bulletin Boards:** Secure posters and visuals with contemporary Indians to display. Some places to view images—*American Indian Center* <http://aic-chicago.org/>, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian <http://www.nmai.si.edu/> and *Minneapolis American Indian Center* <http://www.maicnet.org/>.

**You Tube/Early Elementary Level:** Buffy St. Marie appeared on Sesame Street as an ongoing character to break down stereotypes. Here are two short clips to use—"Classic Sesame Street: I'm an Indian Wherever I Go (song)." <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3J1zrTzcbVM&feature=related> and "Classic Sesame Street: Indians Don't Talk Like That!" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pROGfJ4qcmQ&feature=related>

**Surf American Indian Tribal Web Sites:** Make a list of contemporary tribal nations' websites and have various students and/or groups visit one to report back to the class. Some Great Lakes sites—*Ho-Chunk Nation* <http://www.ho-chunknation.com/>, *Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa* <http://www.lco-nsn.gov/>, *Lac du Flambeau Chippewa* <http://www.lacduflambeauchamber.com/culture.htm>, *Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican* <http://www.mohican-nsn.gov/>, *Oneida Nation* <http://oneida-nsn.gov/>, *Forest Band Potawatomi* <http://www.fcpotawatomi.com/>, *Pokegon Potawatomi* <http://www.pokagonband-nsn.gov/>, *Brotherton Pequot-Mohegan* <http://www.brothertownindians.org/>, *Sac and Fox of Mississippi* <http://www.meskwaki.org/>. Nationwide websites at [http://www.usa.gov/Government/Tribal\\_Sites/index.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Government/Tribal_Sites/index.shtml).

#### You Tube/Middle-High Level:

"How Hollywood stereotyped the Native Americans" [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_hJFi7SRH7Q&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hJFi7SRH7Q&feature=related)  
"Native American Filmmaking" <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBxxavk9cOU&feature=related>

#### Pitfalls

- Make sure images displayed in the classroom emphasize that contemporary native peoples are like other Americans living in city and rural housing, apartments, driving cars, taking public transportation, etc.
- Keep in mind that contemporary images of native peoples may reflect much cultural borrowing; that is, as diverse groups met and shared cultural traditions, formerly unique ways of dress, etc. were adopted by other groups. This is true for regalia seen at powwows and may extend to spiritual traditions as well.

#### 2. Indians have made great contributions to society throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

#### Strategies

**Biography Research:** Assign students to investigate the lives of people mentioned in the exhibit by researching and creating posters, book covers, or written reports. Branch out from people in the exhibit to include other important 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century people with native background such as Elvis Presley, Floyd (Red Crow) Westerman, Johnny Depp, Colin Powell, Shania Twain, and Lori Piestewa.



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#### Pitfalls

- Native people have the same problems as other cultural/ethnic groups, such as homelessness, drunkenness, domestic violence, etc. The stereotype of the “drunken Indian” is so ingrained in American culture that it needs to be constantly addressed by presenting the positive aspects of Native culture, the achievements of many of its citizens, and teaching about how alcohol was introduced and used historically to weaken the spirit of tribal people, move them to reservations, and steal land from them. It is important to stress that intelligent, successful, and sober Native people are not an exception to the rule.
- Researching urban Indians can uncover all the problems that are the legacy of colonization and due to the historical trauma of broken treaties, boarding schools, stolen lands, cultural suppression, and various nonfunctioning governmental trust obligations. Discuss with older students how historical trauma has led to current problems in Native and non-Native cultures.
- Students may be surprised to discover that certain people are native. Try to re-emphasize that native people living today are like other Americans. Revisit the idea that Indians no longer live the way they did a hundred or more years ago. Don't expect Indians to look alike, anymore than Europeans look alike or any other ethnic group. There is no such thing as a real Indian - only Hollywood-created images, which are stereotypes.
- There are people who identify with their native traditions/cultures, some who do not, some who are somewhere in the middle, and some who do not know that they even have native roots. There are millions of students in school who have some Indian ancestors. When you discuss the various biographies, point out that many Indians have assimilated into American life during America's history.

### 3. Native Americans and Indigenous Canadians are very diverse.

#### Strategies

**Metaphor Exercise:** Introduce the concept of “diversity” by projecting a map of Europe. Point to various countries and ask— *what is this country? What language do they speak? What is their environment like? What kinds of food do they like to eat? What kinds of clothes do they wear?* After discussing various countries briefly, ask questions that get at the idea of “diversity”—*is England like Germany? Do they speak the same language? Do they wear the same kinds of clothes? Is the history of their country the same?* Your objective is to get students to see that diversity in Europeans is just like the diversity present in Native tribes. They didn't speak the same language, dress alike, live in the same kind of houses, have the same histories, etc.

**Brainstorm Preconceptions:** Have students draw two pictures: one representing an “American” and one representing an “American Indian.” Line the sets of pictures in two rows, and ask students to compare the “Americans” to the “American Indians.” Elicit that there is no typical American or American Indian.

**Factual Mini-Lecture:** Explain that “Indian” and “Native American” refer to a diverse set of tribes or nations who lived for centuries across the lands that Europeans claimed later to have “discovered,” now called the Americas—the Caribbean islands, Canada, the United States, Mexico, Central and South America.” Teach children that most Native people prefer their specific tribe name first. Over half of native people polled prefer “Indian” to “Native American,” But there is a wide variety of opinion on this issue of naming.

**Tribal Specific Units:** Create units about specific tribes, ideally from your local area, to give culturally specific rather than generalized information about “American Indians.” Use the new information to underscore the idea that this group will be different from other groups; that is, not all Indian nations were/are alike.

**Map Activities:** Use maps to show various aspects of the diversity of native groups such as population in the past and the present, tribal names, population distribution, languages, culture areas, etc. Compare maps over time.

#### Pitfalls

- As you talk about stereotypes, make sure you continually remind students that these impressions are not necessarily true and they will work to dispel inaccurate information and learn the facts!
- Make sure to find contemporary information about the specific tribe you teach or you may inadvertently reinforce the idea that the nation existed only in the past.
- When using maps, make sure to emphasize both the past and the present in your selections. Otherwise, students may assume that map information is static and unchanging.



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#### 4. Indian themed mascots are harmful.

##### Background Reading

“APA resolution calling for the immediate retirement of native-themed mascots”

<http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/resources/communique/2010/08/native-themed-mascots.aspx>

Spindel, Carol. *Dancing at Half-time: Sports and the controversy over American Indian Mascots.*

*Mascots: Racism in Schools by State* at <http://www.aics.org/mascot/mascot.html>

*The Mascot Issue* at <http://www.nativeculturelinks.com/mascots.html>

*National Coalition on Racism in Sports and Media* at <http://www.aimovement.org/ncrsm/index.html>

*School Mascots Explored* <http://www.tolerance.org/activity/school-mascots-explored>

*Students and Teachers against Racism* at <http://www.racismagainstindians.org/UnderstandingMascots.htm>

##### Strategies

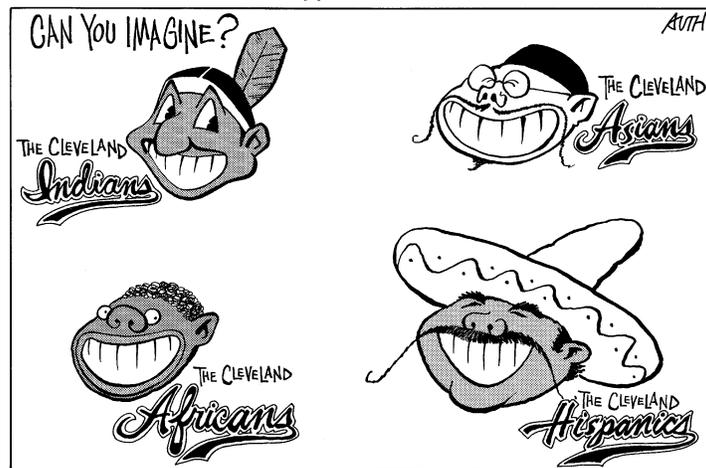
**Local Mascot Issue 1:** Choose a mascot issue relevant to your area, if possible. For Skokie, have students research and present information about the use of an Indian head as a Skokie symbol, when it was used, and where it still is present. Or review how Niles West High School dropped the nickname “Indians” in October, 2000 at “Much Ado about Mascots” <http://www.momentummedia.com/articles/am/am1305/mascots.htm>.

**Local Mascot Issue 2:** If your school has an Indian team name/mascot, find out when the image was adopted, who selected it, and why. What was the Native American population of your school and community then, and what is it now? What tribes were/are represented? Describe how the school’s mascot behaves and what messages the behaviors send to students.

**Film Viewing and Discussion:** Show the film “In Whose Honor,” an overview of the reasons why mascots upset many native groups.

**Mascot Debate:** Pick a current contentious mascot. Have student teams research the issue with one team defending the mascot, while the other argues for getting rid of it. After the debate, conclude by reviewing the battle over the University of Illinois mascot, the Chief. Summarize the pros and cons, and explain what action was eventually taken. Compare it to what happened in the student debate.

**Compare and Contrast:** Have students talk about, or research, stereotypes about their own racial/ethnic groups and imagine a sports mascot based on those stereotypes. Use this cartoon to facilitate discussion.



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Then ask—how would they feel about the public use of such images? Compare to American Indian mascots.

**Persuasive Letters:** After mascots’ lessons, have students write letters to a school, city, or other group that uses native mascots to make known students’ opinions on this issue. Make sure to allow students to voice varying opinions, but demand that they back up their opinion with facts and draw a sound conclusion from them.



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**Primary Documents 1:** Generate a definition of “civil rights.” Review how during the 1960s minorities fought for their civil rights and legislation was enacted to support them. Then have students read the U S Commission of Civil Rights 2001 statement calling “for an end to the use of Native American images and team names by non-Native schools.” Have students share ideas about why it may have taken so long to deal with this issue. Have students read mascot statements from associations that preside over college sports. Ask students to summarize the reasons why these groups have banned offensive mascots and the penalties for not changing them.

**Summarize Exhibit Text:** Project and read aloud the following text from the exhibit.

What’s Wrong with the Chief?

Is Chief Illiniwek’s dance is authentic? Chief Illiniwek’s infamous dance was choreographed in 1926 by Lester Leutwiler and Ralph Hubbard, two non-Native boys completing an Eagle Scout project. Because of this, the Chief’s dance is not “authentic” as many supporters claim.

Were Chief Illiniwek’s clothes were made by an American Indian? Chief Illiniwek’s clothing was made by an Oglala Sioux man named Frank Fools Crow and more closely reflects the traditional clothing of Plains, not the regalia that would have been worn far earlier and in a different region by the Illinois. It furthers the stereotype that all Native people wear feather headdresses and buckskin, and ignores the vast diversity of Native cultures past and present.

Has the Chief ever been played by an American Indian? In Chief Illiniwek’s entire history from 1926 until it was banned in 2007, not once was the mascot portrayed by a Native student. As one Native protestor wrote on a sign, “Being Indian is NOT a character or role that one can play!”

What do Native people think of the Chief? While not all Native people are in agreement, it is clear that the Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma, the closest living decedents of the Illinois Confederation, disapprove. Speaking about Chief Illiniwek, the tribe’s elected Chief Ron Froman said, “I don’t think it was to honor us, because, hell, they ran our (butts) out of Illinois.”

Have students write a brief summary list of what the text says. Discuss the lists. Then project various mascots and ask—*what is wrong with this mascot?* Explore how their list is a way to evaluate any mascot.

#### Pitfalls

- After all discussion, there may be some students who still see nothing wrong with mascots. Read the following statement from the exhibit aloud—“As a child, I was very confused when I saw mascots and propaganda about Native Americans. I experienced feelings of shame and guilt since a lot of media portrayed us as ignorant, unsophisticated ‘savages’.” Ask students to explain to this Native person why mascots honor him. The goal is to highlight how white privilege makes assumptions for native people.
- Choose a specific mascot. Ask students to explain specifically how the mascot honors Native people. Explore how accurate/inaccurate the clothes are for tribes that lived in the region. Discuss how other symbols such as Frito Bandido, Little Black Sambo, or Aunt Jemima are no longer used because they are offensive.
- There are native people who support the use of mascots. Make sure to research/present cases where a mascot has native support, such as the partnership between Florida State University and the Seminole Nation <http://www.fsu.edu/news/2005/06/17/seminole.support/> or Central Michigan University and the Chippewa [http://www.cmich.edu/To\\_Be\\_A\\_Chippewa.htm](http://www.cmich.edu/To_Be_A_Chippewa.htm). Compare these cases to others, specifically to the University of Illinois controversy, to determine what makes these partnerships different from the U of I case.
- A discussion of mascots must be done in a non-judgmental atmosphere. It is important to respect all opinions. If not, students may actually become more set in their ways and entrench themselves in their initial opinions. Ask students to back up opinions with facts/evidence as a way for them to realize unsupportable positions they may have taken.

#### 5. Casinos do not make all Indians rich.

#### Strategies

**Primary Documents:** Have students read/discuss the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act passed in 1988. This act was created to decrease American Indian dependence on “government handouts, encourage economic development, and promote tribal self-sufficiency.” Relate this act to US trust responsibility and how paradoxical it is to “self-sufficiency” quoted in the act. Then teach class that “government handouts” is a pejorative term for the payments that tribes were promised by treaty in exchange for land; that it is Indian, not government, money.



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**Fact Sheet:** Have students do research to find more evidence to add to the exhibit statistics below and have them report back to whole class.

- Indian gaming makes up less than 10% of the legal gambling industry in the United States.
- Successful Indian casinos are located in big cities.
- Native casinos located on isolated reservations do little more than break even.
- 50% of gaming income must be reinvested in Tribal infrastructure or community programs.
- Today's gaming is often only viable source of tribal employment and revenue available (on reservations).
- American Indians remain our country's most impoverished racial group.

**Case Study:** Read about the Mashantucket Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut and Rosebud Sioux Casino near Valentine, Nebraska. Make sure to set guidelines for comparing, such as tribal population, operation costs, revenues, benefits, losses. Have students rank factors that predict the successful casinos and those that do not. Have them write a conclusion proving that "Casinos do not make all Indians rich" using evidence from case studies.

#### Pitfalls

- Many traditional native people do not like casinos because casinos represent a deviation from historic communal sharing toward an individual, profit-motive view of the world. Make sure to represent traditional views against casinos. A good place to begin research— *Haudenosaunee Statement On High Stakes Gambling* [http://www.onondaganation.org/gov/policy\\_gambling.html](http://www.onondaganation.org/gov/policy_gambling.html)
- Casinos are a small part in an overall picture of the history between the US and Indian tribal nations. Not all tribal nations operate casinos. But the problems faced by many nations are similar with or without casino gambling, except in the most successful casino ventures. Students need a full understanding of the history of treaties, their obligations, sovereignty, and the fact that Indians receive what they are entitled to and not "handouts." Then they can understand how casinos were/are an attempt at economic development by many tribes using their sovereign powers. But like any other business they are subject to success and failure.

### 6. Treaty land agreements were unfair and unfulfilled.

#### Background

*Background on Bear Butte Issue* at <http://protectbearbutte.com/about/>

*Biker Bar Threatens Sacred Land* at [http://www.defendbearbutte.org/bb\\_sacred\\_sites.htm](http://www.defendbearbutte.org/bb_sacred_sites.htm)

*Harvard Pluralism Project: Background on Bear Butte* at <http://pluralism.org/reports/view/57>

Lazarus, Edward. *Black Hills/White Justice: The Sioux Nation versus the Untied States, 1775 to the Present.*

#### Strategies

**Film:** View "A Good Day to Die" from the video series *How the West Was Lost*. Have class discuss the points raised in the film about treaties and the Great Sioux Reservation. Summarize native point of view shown.

**Primary Documents:** Use the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 as the basis for examining what U.S. and tribal nations agreed to. Then have students read about the settlement reached to pay the tribes for the land taken illegally in the past. Have students investigate *The Black Hills Land Claim*, an ongoing land dispute between the Lakota nation and the US Federal Government. Ask—*why have the tribes rejected the settlement?* Relate to how land agreements were forced upon the Lakota and others and how they have remained unfulfilled.

**Historical Timeline:** Have students create a timeline of the significant events from the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868 up to today relevant to the tribes in South Dakota.

**Local Treaty Research:** Find out which tribal nations occupied the land where your students go to school. Have them find the treaties made to take the land and the history/events of the tribes from that time to the present. Have students answer if, and how, treaty land agreements were unfair and unfulfilled for this specific tribe.

**Film:** View the film "Mato Paha: Rally to Protect Bear Butte" by Medicine Wheel Media to engage students in a contemporary land dispute that pits proponents of building a motorcycle bar on land sacred to the Lakota and Cheyenne. Have them summarize the arguments for and against the bar proposal and decide how the class feels about the issue. Extend this activity by having students write letters.



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**Maps:** Select maps showing the dwindling of the Great Sioux and/or other Indian lands over time. You might also elect to do a historical timeline using maps showing land cessions/removal from the 1600s to the present.

#### Pitfalls

- Many students might feel that these promises were so long ago that tribes should just adapt and take the money. Remind them that if the promises had been kept in the first place, none of this would be happening. Ask them to evaluate how time and justice are related. Discuss honoring obligations and the statute of limitations on justice.
- If you explore a local tribe, make sure students have enough background and knowledge to understand how any treaty/land cessions /removal might have affected them.

#### 7. Off-reservation reserved rights in treaties were also unfulfilled.

#### Strategies

**Definition:** Define “reserved rights” directly for students. They are rights that Native Americans are entitled to concerning fishing, hunting, gathering, and mineral resources on off-reservation lands. These rights on off-reservation lands were guaranteed in treaties.

**Brainstorm List:** After making sure that students understand “reserved rights,” ask them what some of these rights might mean for the tribes. For example—*what does it mean that tribes can fish on off-reservation lands?*

**Treaty/Map Study:** Have students read a summary of the Treaty of St. Peters 1837(also called White Pine Tree Treaty). Have them summarize reserved rights in the treaty and create a map showing areas of land cessions and reserved rights. Do the same for the Treaty of LaPointe 1842.

**Case Study:** Have students research the history of the Crandon Mine controversy that took place in Wisconsin between the late 1970s and 2003. Ask them to decide how the doctrine of reserved rights applied in this case. A good place to start—<http://www.wrpc.net/articles/defending-a-common-home-nativenon-native-alliances-against-mining-corporations-in-wisconsin/>

#### Pitfalls

- This topic is so related to treaty rights in #6 that it might be good to deal with both of them at once. Make sure students understand the distinction between on/off reservation lands and how “reserved rights” applied to off-reservation lands occupied by settlers in the past and still pertain to these lands today.
- Reserved rights have not been honored by non-Natives. Native peoples have fought to regain or maintain their reserved rights. With declining fish populations in the Great Lakes, fishing rights have been contested by non-Native fishermen. Tribes have been willing to work with them as tribes are also concerned with overfishing. For example, in 2000, tribes in Michigan signed an agreement to replace traditional gillnets with trap nets to reduce overfishing. See *Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission* at <http://www.glifwc.org/> for more information about Native wildlife management.
- Students in our area may hold some extreme views passed down from family members because of the Walleye Wars, fishing wars that took place in Wisconsin in the 1980s and 1990s. Use a pre-assessment to determine if students already have a fixed view on any of these reserved rights. *\*The Walleye War: The Struggle for Ojibwe Spearfishing and Treaty Rights* by Larry Nesper gives overview of this history.

#### 8. Native peoples continue to fight for their rights.

#### Strategies

**Surf Native Rights Web Sites:** Make a list of American Indian rights websites and have various students and/or groups visit one to report back to the class about each site. Some sites are:

##### Regional Rights Groups

- *Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission* at <http://www.glifwc.org/>
- *Midwest SOARRING Foundation* at <http://www.midwestsoaring.org/>

##### National Rights Groups

- *Native American Rights Fund* at <http://www.narf.org/>
- *National Congress of American Indians* at <http://www.ncai.org/>



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- National Indian Education Association at <http://www.niea.org/>
- Association on American Indian Affairs at <http://www.indian-affairs.org/>
- American Indian Movement at <http://www.aimovement.org/>

#### International Rights Groups

- International Indian Treaty Council at <http://www.treatycouncil.org/home.htm>
- United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>

**Video Viewing:** Watch the “Wounded Knee” episode of the PBS series *We Shall Remain*. Discuss how this video underscores that Native people continue to fight for their rights today.

#### Pitfalls

- Focusing on protests/actions by native groups can sometimes lead to a lopsided view that the only thing Indians do is complain, etc. Make sure to continually clarify that these rights are theirs and that they have been trying to get justice for over a 100 years or more in many cases. Emphasize that they are not going to give up on what are their legitimate rights. It is in the non-fulfillment of them by governments— local, state, and federal—that the trouble lies.
- Many movements reflect “Pan-Indianism”, a force that has worked to unify diverse tribes since the 1970s. Pan-Indian organizations pool the resources of indigenous groups in order to protect the interests of native peoples across the continent. Remind students that many tribal nations also have specific rights issues that may or may not affect other tribal nations.

### 9. Native cultures were highly advanced before European contact.

#### Strategies

**Culture Map Circle Chart:** Write “Culture” in the middle of a spider chart. Ask students to fill in words that are related to “culture” such as language, history, science, education, technology, family systems and values, communication, government, art, world view, etc. Generate responses to American culture by filling in examples of each on the specific arms on the chart. Do the same for American Indian culture to teach that both are complex but different. Ask—“*Is American Indian culture as complex as American culture? Why or why not?*”

**Brainstorm Chart:** Create a two-column chart. Write “civilized” in first column. Ask students what words come to mind when they hear “civilized.” Do the same for “savage” in the second column. Compare answers and have class generate a sentence definition for both terms. Ask: “*Using what you know about American Indian culture, would you say it fits the definition of “civilized”? Why do you think Europeans called Indians savages? Is that accurate based on the information on the culture chart?*”

**Picture Imaging:** Have students find pictures in books, magazines, and/or on the computer that demonstrate the civilizations of various Indian tribes in the past. Give guidelines for the picture search such as agriculture, cities, trade routes, tools, art, etc. Have students each bring pictures to class. Brainstorm a definition of “complex” with the class. Then do a picture imaging exercise with some student picture examples. Ask questions like “*What do you see? Did native people have complex civilizations? How do you know?*”

#### Pitfalls

- “Civilization” can be a connotative word evoking the European idea of living versus a more general definition. Work to challenge stereotypes that pop up in discussions that reflect a European point of view. Turn the civilized argument on its head by giving example of “uncivilized” behavior by white men. The challenge is to see both sides as men, both good and bad.
- Use of loaded words like “savage” reflect the view of one group towards another. Extend the definition of “savage” by giving students other definitions, such as “not domesticated or cultivated; wild” or “lacking polish or manners; rude” so that they begin to understand how labeling someone “savage” unfairly stereotypes whole groups of people.
- It is important to remember that any part of any culture might be attacked by those outside of it either from ignorance or for reasons of discrimination. Emphasize that cultures are different, not better. Historically, devaluing native contributions and cultures was a way for Europeans to demonize tribes and make it easy to get people to make war against them. Share the following information with the class—historically, when Indians were taken prisoner by white men, they almost always tried to escape. But when white people were



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taken captive, they often wanted to remain with their Indian captors. Even Ben Franklin made note of this. Ask—*what does that say about Indian vs. white culture?*

#### 10. There is a large Urban Indian population.

- ✓ 61% of Native people live in urban areas as of 2000 as compared to 37% in 1950s and 1960s
- ✓ 35,000 Native people from over 100 different tribes live in Chicago land area

#### Background

American Indian Center of Chicago. *Chicago's 50 Years of Powwows*. Images of America Series: Arcadia Press  
*Chicago's Urban Indians* <http://www.wttw.com/main.taf?p=1,7,1,1,21>  
*History/Federal Indian Policy* [http://lawlib.lclark.edu/blog/native\\_america/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Indian-Policies.pdf](http://lawlib.lclark.edu/blog/native_america/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Indian-Policies.pdf) *Relocation* <http://www.pbs.org/indiancountry/history/relocate.html>

#### Strategies

**Create a Fact Sheet:** Have students research Chicago urban Indians online and create a fact sheet about them. Give students a fact sheet template to direct their research.

**Relocation Activity:** Ask students to generate a list of reasons why people move, such as job offers, better housing, to escape from something (war, bad neighborhood, etc.), financial hardship, etc.

**Factual Min-lecture:** Do a historical review of the Relocation Era when many Indians moved to or were forced to move to urban areas. Make sure students understand the American government's reasons for initiating this program and how it was carried out. After discussion, ask—*What were the reasons that American Indians moved to cities? How did it affect them?*

**Surf American Indian Urban Centers Web Sites:** Make a list of urban Indian websites that offer services to contemporary native people and have various students/groups visit one to report back to the class about the site. Some Chicago/Illinois sites: *American Indian Center* <http://aic-chicago.org/>, *American Indian Health Services of Chicago* <http://www.aihschicago.org/>, *American Indian Association of Illinois* <http://www.chicago-american-indian-edu.org/index.htm>, *Native News Network* <http://www.nativenewsnetwork.com/challenges-faced-by-chicago-american-indians.html>.

#### Pitfalls

- Make sure to understand the history of Federal American Indian Policies in order to place relocation in perspective with other policies used in US and American Indian relations. Decisions about native people's lives were always made for them and not in consultation with them. Keep that in mind when discussing the advantages and disadvantages of relocation and the positive and negative reasons why people move.