



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

to strengthen teaching in public schools®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2016 Volume I: Contemporary American Indian History

Indian Boarding Schools: A Case Study of Assimilation, Resistance, and Resilience

Guide for Curriculum Unit 16.01.09, published September 2016
by Barbara Prillaman

In this unit, high school students will delve into the sociological concept of assimilation through the case study of Indian boarding schools. Students will understand that assimilation occurs through a variety of means - voluntary and/or forced and that social and cultural differences between racial and ethnic groups “disappear” when one group is absorbed into another group’s culture and social networks or when two groups merge to form a new, blended culture. Through the use of primary and secondary sources text sets, students will be able to answer the following questions categorized into three themes - assimilation, resistance, and resilience: What is assimilation and its variety of terms and how are these sociological concepts related to Native American people? How was assimilation used as a discrimination tool against Native American people? How have Native American people resisted these assimilation attempts? and How have Native American people demonstrated their resilience to these assimilation policies over time? Common Core Standards are addressed, as students will need to evaluate and synthesize these multiple sources to answer the above questions individually. Collaboratively, they will create dramatic readings to share with the school community.

(Developed for Dual Enrollment [DTCC] Sociology, grades 11-12; recommended for Sociology/U.S. History, grades 10-12)

<https://teachers.yale.edu>

©2023 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University, All Rights Reserved. Yale National Initiative®, Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute®, On Common Ground®, and League of Teachers Institutes® are registered trademarks of Yale University.

For terms of use visit https://teachers.yale.edu/terms_of_use