

## Using Indigenous Social Justice Models to Inspire Students

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### Introduction

As I write this, it is Fall 2020 and the United States is in the grip of so many different crises. Here is just a snapshot of a few: the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic<sup>1</sup>, an election year fraught with divisiveness and alarming rhetoric,<sup>2</sup> forest fires ravaging the American West,<sup>3</sup> President Trump's positive coronavirus diagnosis,<sup>4</sup> and social unrest and protests triggered by the death of George Floyd in May.<sup>5</sup>

I know that I undoubtedly omitted several catastrophes, but perhaps identifying more would be overwhelming and disheartening. It is hard to come to terms with how the pandemic has altered my employment as a public school teacher, and that I have not taught my students in-person since March. I see them daily online as I teach them on Zoom and my district's Virtual Academy,<sup>6</sup> which any teacher from a variety of learning institutions would say can be tricky, demanding, and is simply not the same as being in a school building. I miss and worry about my middle school English Learner (EL) students, and I know they miss the school atmosphere. As ELs, they already face more varied challenges than mainstream students due to language barriers, not being able to travel to see family in other countries due to COVID restrictions, and being disproportionately affected by the coronavirus.<sup>7</sup> Many of them are also serving as babysitters and remote learning gurus for younger siblings while their parents work. They have so many questions for me and need reassurance that things can go back to normal at some time.

For them, "normal" means not just an end to the coronavirus and going back to school in-person. It is a larger, overarching perception that the world will return to the more settled environment they have mostly experienced through their short years. While they want situations to resolve, they also believe that they and their peers may be able to help effect change. I have a teacher Instagram account on which I have befriended current and past students, and they overwhelmingly support various forms of social justice and have even encouraged older friends and relatives to vote. They know that often, there are many adjustments and modifications that have to happen for things to get back to "normal," or a better normal. I have likened it to when they have braces on their teeth, and need to get them tightened. Uncomfortable, yes, and frequently painful. But necessary for growth and change.

### Background

I am an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at George Read Middle School in New Castle, Delaware, which is in the Colonial School District. Students at George Read

come from diverse backgrounds and face many challenges in their school and home environments – over one-third of its 762 students are identified as being low income.<sup>8</sup> About 12% of the student population are ELs, with Spanish being the first language for the majority of them. In addition, over one-quarter of George Read’s students are Hispanic, and a high percentage of those students are bilingual in Spanish and English.

The EL students I see are those with intermediate to high English skills who are placed in the same section of an ELA class in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. I usually have about 15-20 ELs in each section of those classes, and I also service some 6th and 8th grade ELs who are additionally identified as Special Ed, and who have been placed in a Special Ed ELA class. I typically service about 55 ELs each year in grades 6-8. A few of the students I teach have been transitioned out of the Colonial School District’s “Newcomer” EL program for middle school that is housed at McCullough Middle School and taught by my ESL colleagues there. Students in grades 6-8 who are new immigrants or migrant students with limited English proficiency (as identified by the WIDA Screener for English proficiency<sup>9</sup> and the HMH Reading Inventory<sup>10</sup>) are recommended to the Newcomer program at McCullough, regardless of their district feeder middle school. They are in a sheltered classroom all day for all content areas that are taught in English, and are not transitioned out into mainstream classes or back to their feeder middle schools until their English test scores have risen, and they demonstrate the academic, social, and emotional skills that would indicate success in the general school population.

For the 2020-21 academic year, my ELs come from an array of countries in Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, and a range of native Spanish-speaking countries such as Mexico, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Ecuador, and the Dominican Republic. The students in my classes represent many facets of the EL population: first-generation English learners who have recently arrived to the United States; students who were born in the United States or another country speaking a language other than English and who are now bilingual; and those born in the United States into bilingual or multigenerational families. Students in the latter group may have the least exposure to their families’ native language(s) and countries, and may express that “I don’t speak a language other than English very well,” or that they have never met many of their extended family members. I also have a few students who are in the ESL program though their only language is English; most of them are from countries in Africa or the Caribbean, and speak what is termed “non-U.S. English.”

Regardless of their language knowledge and whether they are conversationally bilingual, all students grapple with the increasing rigor of academic English and the demands of state and English proficiency tests. Many of them struggle to express themselves verbally and through writing, and their WIDA ACCESS writing and speaking scores are often what keeps them in the EL program.

## **Rationale**

Most middle school students are intensely interested in issues of fairness and equity (oftentimes, as it pertains to themselves, since I frequently hear them saying things like “That’s not fair; I always get in trouble,” as they try to argue their innocence—and believe me, they could debate with the best defense lawyers!). Nevertheless, joking aside, as students mature into their early teen years, most of them want to experience and become an integral part of a just environment.

I believe this desire is even more acute for my English Learners. As immigrants or the children of immigrants, they and their families are directly affected by immigration law, detention centers, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA).<sup>11</sup> Many of them have had family members who have been deported, they have seen fellow students and their families be forced to return to their native countries, and I know a well-regarded teacher in my district who is a “DREAMer.”

Over the past few years, I have developed curriculum units and other school activities centered around environmental and social justice topics; they have all been well-received by the students, most of whom truly want to engage with their communities as they begin to establish their identities and see themselves as vital parts of society. For example, after reading the novel *Refugee*<sup>12</sup>, which tells the stories of three refugee protagonists in three different historical timelines—WWII Germany, the Cuban boat crisis in the 1990s, and the current civil war in Syria—my then seventh-grade students were angered and touched by the injustices in the refugee and immigrant policies that were in place for the books’ characters. At the end of the book, the author, Gratz, suggests donating money to UNICEF or Save the Children to help refugees around the world. My students were so touched by the fictional stories in the novel and the plight of actual refugees – as well as their own experiences – that they suggested having a whole-school fundraiser; we donated the money we raised to UNICEF.

In another unit in which we were preparing to write an argumentative essay, we studied the issues that plastics pose to the environment, learned about teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg,<sup>13</sup> and then examined the exorbitant amount of items from our school cafeteria and classrooms that were not getting recycled. Students crafted an email to Delaware Governor John Carney in which they made a case for increased funding to help schools recycle, wrote a petition to our principal on how to begin recycling, and started an after-school recycling club (which, unfortunately, did not come to fruition due to the statewide COVID-19 school closings).

I also know that many of my students’ ancestors from Mexico, South America, and various Caribbean islands were Indigenous peoples; some students have mentioned this to me over the years. While it seems that many of these students are more removed from that part of their heritage and identify more with their Hispanic lineage, I think it would be interesting to incorporate some learning about Indigenous peoples into a unit of study.

For these reasons, I would like to study Native American social justice models, and how Native people have resisted and persevered over centuries, while facing innumerable obstacles. As students move through their school years and into young adulthood and beyond, they will surely face hurdles, as we all do. I think that studying and applying Indigenous models of civic engagement to their daily lives and to causes or issues they hold dear could be immensely inspiring and useful to my students, and help them feel empowered to persevere.

Taking all these factors into account, I am creating a curriculum unit that would inspire students to take Native American social justice models and apply them to their current lives and situations they would like to change. This unit will be a precursor to the aforementioned unit on recycling and argumentative essay writing. Students will learn about Native American social justice models, and see how they can weave them into the recycling task. Hopefully, they will then be able to think about and incorporate these models into other areas in their lives.

To employ the four language domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing, students will create an online written and video/photo diary with Journey,<sup>14</sup> a free Google app for journaling that is compatible with iOS and Android phones, as well as a downloadable add-on to Google Chromebooks. This is perfect for the students, as Colonial School District is a 1:1 device district in which all middle school students have a Chromebook. Furthermore, journal entries and videos on Journey use Google Drive for syncing and back-up, and all students have extensively used Google Drive at school for their files.

I am hopeful that including a verbal portion in this curriculum unit will help students become more comfortable with the Speaking section on their annual language proficiency test, the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs Assessment.<sup>15</sup> Though most of my students are conversationally bilingual, they grapple with the rigor of verbal academic English and the demands of state and English proficiency tests. Their speaking scores are often what keeps them in the ESL program, though students nationwide have struggled with the increasing demands of the four sections of the ACCESS assessment.<sup>16</sup> The Speaking portion of ACCESS requires students to wear a headset with a microphone and verbally respond to a series of questions and prompts;<sup>17</sup> their answers are recorded and digitally evaluated by national WIDA test experts. Students understandably find this process awkward and distressing. Many of them do not like the physical process of wearing the headsets and are anxious about their peers and test administrators hearing their responses.

Additionally, I would also like to give my students the opportunity to practice online speaking skills because they absolutely need that ability, especially in today's Zoom world. With the movement of schools to a remote online platform during COVID-19, thousands of teachers across the country (probably millions!), including myself, have

been presented daily with muted, off-camera students who do not want to speak. They simply are not comfortable speaking on a video platform or seeing themselves speak. Speaking is a skill they will need to master for success in life and their careers, and it is a necessity for them to be comfortable using and speaking English on video and audio platforms. Students must demonstrate an expanding verbal academic range in the quantity and quality of their oral exchanges – both in testing and everyday interactions – and I want the oral part of this project to help them feel more comfortable during testing, and also in their everyday lives.

The Colonial School District ELA Speaking and Listening standards also require that students *gain, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information, ideas, and evidence through listening and speaking as well as through media* and *integrate skills related to media use (both critical analysis and production of media)*.<sup>18</sup> I am hoping students will improve their speaking skills and comfortability and learn to use a new media platform while they create their journals and video diaries.

### **Unit Objectives**

This unit is designed for middle school students, but could be modified for upper elementary grades and high school students. It is an online journal writing project that would incorporate visuals and video, and on which they would record their thoughts and observations on Native American social justice strategies. Possible anchor questions could be:

- Give me three examples of false narratives you have learned about the founding of the United States, as it pertains to Native Americans.
- Were you previously aware that Native Americans had been treated so badly by generations of immigrants, and also the U.S. government? If so, what are two new things you learned? If not, what is something that really stuck out to you?
- In what ways have you or your family had to live with a false narrative as you have navigated life in the United States? What can you do to reclaim your own narrative?
- What are some things Native Americans have done to change their narrative? How does narrative change lead to social change?
- How can you apply some Native American social justice models to your own life? To our school community?

Students will record written and oral responses to these questions in their Journey online diaries, and can also use pictures or drawings to illustrate their entries. These entries will be shared with me through their school Google Drive accounts.

Writing and Speaking standards will be taken from the Common Core State Standards (CCSS)<sup>19</sup> and the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards for Speaking and Writing and Listening and Reading.<sup>20</sup> We will also incorporate aspects of the Colonial School District's mission for student learning, some of which were stated above.

## Content

To give the students some background on what North America was really like before European explorers landed on its shores, we will be using excerpts of Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz's *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*.<sup>21</sup> In particular, I would use excerpts of the Introduction, "This Land," and the first chapter, to help students understand some false "New World" narratives, where Native Americans came from, and how many of them are currently in the United States. We would also be looking at Chapter Ten: "Indigenous Action, Indigenous Rights," and the Conclusion, "Water is Life:" Indigenous Resistance in the Twenty-First Century," to study Native Americans' constant fight for rights on their own lands. This chapter details the Standing Rock tribal community and their recent fight to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL),<sup>22</sup> which students may be familiar with. This chapter serves as a powerful example and introduction to the students of how Native Americans are currently fighting to protect their health and lives—and the health of everyone who would be affected by DAPL.

Though written for younger elementary students, I plan to use *The People Shall Continue*<sup>23</sup> by Simon J. Ortiz. Written in poetry form or as an oral history/narrative, this picture book tells the history of Native peoples in North America, and how they held onto their traditions and endured. It is beautifully illustrated, and also gives students exposure to an example of an oral history, which we do not often do in middle school English classes. The author's note at the end of the book also mentions DAPL.

*Keeping Promises: What is Sovereignty and Other Questions About Indian Country*<sup>24</sup> by Betty Reid and Ben Winton, details the relationship between the U.S. government and Native peoples, and how Native Americans define their *sovereignty*. This will be a new term for most of my students (and one I hope they do not use against me when they outline their sovereignty and rights to flout our school's rules about using headphones/air pods in class, or being on-camera during remote learning) and I hope as ELs they feel a connection to a recurring theme in the book: that language and stories are a powerful link to identity. Across the bottom pages of the book, there is a timeline that lists graphics and important dates in Native American history, from Columbus first landing in the Americas to 1993's Religious Freedoms Restoration Act.

I also like the book for its candid pictures of Native Americans from various tribes who are engaged in everyday activities or occupations, as well as outfitted in native dress and partaking in tribal customs. We would pay particular attention to the last two chapters of the book, "Between Nations" and "Beyond Cultural Survival: National and

Local Affairs,” which detail how Native Americans started to reclaim their sovereignty, and the growth of Indian political activism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Finally, I think the students will especially enjoy the documentary *And Now We Rise: A Portrait of Samuel Johns*,<sup>25</sup> which tells the amazing and powerful story of Samuel Johns, a Native American activist and hip-hop artist. His authenticity and ability to tell his story, though painful at times, serves as a wonderful example of resolve and determination. How do you get in touch with your culture and the very essence of what makes you *you*, when so much of that has been erased? How do you begin to reclaim that, and use it to change the world around you? Johns’ story, and these questions, should help my students with their Journey online journal entries. And maybe they will even want to rap some of their verbal responses! Johns also travels to Standing Rock, and the documentary includes some excellent footage to give the students context for the protests. I also really like Johns’ use of the phrase “pushing for human advancement” and will use that as a recurring theme in our daily classroom activities.

## **Strategies**

Students need varied exposure to their new language that incorporates visual and audio supports; these supports should continue to be utilized long after students have become conversationally proficient to help them gain academic language. Using technology with EL students increases their English proficiency, and also leads to increased motivation and confidence.<sup>26</sup> Artistic expression, as well, can be an important part of ELs’ literacy skills, bridging a gap between written and oral language.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, research has shown a correlation between arts instruction and literacy skills,<sup>28</sup> as well as established that the brain stores verbal-based information and image-based information distinctly.<sup>29</sup> Using visuals and pictures is a customary ESL strategy, but one that is minimized when students achieve an intermediate level of English. In designing this unit, I wanted to find a way to use technology that would be easy for students to use, as well as give them a way to effortlessly integrate visuals.

Many of my students need reading strategies that will help them comprehend and access unfamiliar vocabulary words, context, and background knowledge. For some of the selections from the texts we will be reading, I will have students build background knowledge so they can understand the excerpts; discuss and highlight new vocabulary words, and have them use the new words in class. While we do not have enough time to read all of the books, examining “chunks” of reading is a research-proven way to increase comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.<sup>30</sup>

Students will be producing an online journal in which they will begin to record their verbal, written and visual thoughts and representations about Native American social justice models, and begin to think about how they can use those models in their daily lives, and to effect change in their communities. In particular, we will be using these

models and strategies to see how we can influence the school community in caring more about recycling, and to partake in our recycling club and project.

### **Classroom Activities** (designed for a daily 60- to 90-minute ELA class)

#### Day One: Introduction to U.S. Creation Myths

##### *Warm-Up*

To get the students thinking about how the United States was founded, and the *false narratives* surrounding the American identity/creation (my students are familiar with the notion of a narrative, as they have to write narrative pieces, but for teachers who have not used this term, they can simply describe a false narrative as a *false story*), I will have my students answer the following questions on Schoology,<sup>31</sup> the Learning Management System (LMS) that Colonial School District extensively uses for its students:

1. *What have you learned in school about how the United States became the United States? Think about what you have been taught about who discovered the land that became the United States. (Hint: In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue...)*
2. *Before Europeans came to the land that became the United States, many Native peoples were already living here and considered it to be their home. What do you think happened to those people after Europeans arrived?*

##### Class Activities

After students have had some time to answer the Schoology questions, we will discuss their answers and then look at excerpts of Dunbar-Ortiz's *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People*<sup>32</sup>, specifically the introduction, "This Land," pages 1, 3-5, and 8-15. I will ask the students to pay particular attention to The Doctrine of Discovery, which is mentioned on page 4, and how that made it possible for Columbus and other explorers and groups like the Pilgrims to claim far-flung lands on which Native people had been living. (I imagine they will be able to relate to the unfairness of this, as areas of the school or their homes may, at times, be claimed by other students or family members—much like my sister claimed about 75% of the bedroom we shared as children). Facetiousness aside, those students whose families are recent immigrants to the United States may have experienced a version of this doctrine in their home countries, or similar governmental policies that could have influenced their families to leave.



We will then move on to pages 8-15, where we will explore Manifest Destiny and how that idea led to the rest of the United States being settled in most of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. While many of them have already learned about or heard of Manifest Destiny, they were likely not asked to think critically about how this principle destroyed the lives of so many Native peoples. I think the top of page 8 will be extremely relevant for them, as Dunbar-Ortiz states of Manifest Destiny: "...the belief that (white) English-speaking Americans were destined to spread their presence and their ideals across the entire continent."<sup>33</sup> As English learners, I would be very interested to hear their thoughts and opinions on the implications of this statement—especially with today’s heightened focus on equity. For example, in the school community, we are teaching them English and academic English. They and their families are often confronted with school and district information that is presented in English only. Do they feel, in some way, that a form of Manifest Destiny is being exercised over them?

After reading these pages, students will use their Chromebooks to create a Journey<sup>34</sup> account using their Colonial School District Google account information. Set-up is very easy; once students have logged into Journey with their school credentials, they are taken directly to their Journey journal page, where they can begin typing. Permissions can also be set that allows Journey to access Google Drive, which should also be helpful for students. Journey allows users to insert photos, webpage links, animated images, video and audio files, emoticons, and daily activity tags. If students would like, they can also download the Journey app on their Android or iOS phones so they can access Journey anywhere. Note: As we are operating remotely right now due to the COVID-19 pandemic, students may prefer to make Journal entries on their phones.

Once students have created their Journey accounts, we will turn to chapter one of the book, "Follow the Corn." Before looking at parts of chapter one, I will tell students to remember what we have just learned in the Introduction, and to continue to look for examples of *false narratives* about the founding of the U.S., as they will be posting about this in their first Journey entry. In particular, we will focus on how corn drove trade, the sophisticated trade routes and roads throughout North America, as well as the use of fire in hunting and farming.

There is a lot of information here for students to digest, as they may not have ever been asked or challenged to alter their thinking about the "early" years of the United States. Keeping in mind that I had asked them to focus on *false narratives* before we delved into chapter one, I will ask them to answer the following questions on Journey for their inaugural entry:

*Based on what we have read today, what are two false narratives you have learned about the founding of the United States, as it relates to Native Americans?*

*Think about the recent killings of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor.<sup>35</sup> Do you think the United States is still being affected by a form of Manifest Destiny today? Why or why not?*

Day Two: Videos, Reading, and Vocabulary

*Class Activities*

We will begin our second class by looking at episode one of the *500 Nations*<sup>36</sup> documentary series, which in part addresses a history of the United States that we rarely learn about in U.S. schools: the Indigenous history of the United States before Europeans arrived.

After watching parts of this video (Episode 1 runs until about 45 minutes on this YouTube link), we will read *The People Shall Continue* by Simon J. Ortiz<sup>37</sup>, a short picture book that is told as a Native American traditional oral narrative, or history. Written in a poetry format, the book details the histories of many Native nations in North America, how they traded and coexisted together, the arrival of Europeans and the destruction of their lands and cultures, resistance and fighting, treaties, reservations, resettlement in cities, and social activism.


Throughout the unit, as students encounter unfamiliar words, they will use a vocabulary graphic organizer to identify, define, and perhaps find a representative picture online of words with which they are not familiar. I have found Merriam-Webster's Learner's dictionary<sup>38</sup> to be a good online dictionary. In a normal school year, I would give students the opportunity to sketch their definitions on the graphic organizer, but as most schools are fully remote or paperless in a hybrid setting, pasting photos into the organizer will have to suffice. I would upload this document in Microsoft Word or turn it into a Kami<sup>39</sup> document on Schoology, so that students could open it online, regardless of their learning location or setting.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary Journal**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Where I found it:</b>	<b>Dictionary Definition</b>	<b>Picture</b>
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Indigenous	Dunbar-Ortiz, p. 1	Produced, living, or existing naturally in a particular region or environment	
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**Sentences:**

- There are many Indigenous people living in that area.
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At any time while posting on Journey, students may upload photos or music or audio files. They could be encouraged to find music they find representative of what we are learning, or record audio of themselves talking. Photos for Journey or their vocabulary journals could be ones they have taken themselves, or they could use free photo-sharing sites such as Pixabay<sup>40</sup> or Unsplash.<sup>41</sup>

*Exit Ticket*

Students will log onto Journey and post answers to the following questions: *Were you previously aware that Native Americans had been treated so badly by generations of immigrants, and also the U.S. government? If so, what are two new things you learned? If not, what is something that really stuck out to you?*

Day Three: Continued Reading/Journey entries

*Class Activities*

Today we will examine Reid and Winton's *Keeping Promises: What is Sovereignty and Other Questions About Indian Country*<sup>42</sup> to begin to shift towards the ideas of sovereignty, continuing to resist, and revisiting and rewriting narratives. To begin class, we will look at the timeline that runs across the bottom of the pages of the book, and the photos of Native Americans. While students may be somewhat familiar with a few of the historical dates on the timeline from what they have previously learned in school, their experience when learning about Native Americans is that their history ended sometime

around 1890, as if they all went to live on reservations or disappeared. The timeline in *Keeping Promises* continues well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and includes page after page of examples of resistance and social activism, such as the occupations of Alcatraz and Wounded Knee Village.

The photos in *Keeping Promises* of Native Americans living their everyday lives or going about their occupations, as well as outfitted in native dress and partaking in tribal customs, will assist students in realizing that they have continued to live rich and varied lives. For me, seeing the timeline across the bottom of the book's pages, while also being able to view these photos, is a poignant and powerful lesson about the amazing endurance and determination of the human spirit, especially when entire societies and cultures have been devastated at the hands of others.

After looking at the timeline and photos, and discussing some of the activism events in the last two chapters of the book, "Between Nations" and "Beyond Cultural Survival: National and Local Affairs," I will have students log on to Journey and post answers to the following questions: *In what ways have you or your family had to live with a false narrative as you have navigated life in the United States? What can you do to reclaim your own narrative?* Students will be encouraged to upload photos of themselves and family members to this post; if they feel uncomfortable with doing so, they may find images of Native people from the free image websites mentioned above. Students might also record audio of themselves talking with family members that they wish to upload, or an audio recording of their thoughts on this part of *Keeping Promises*.

Next, we will dive into the title of the book and examine the definition and concept of *sovereignty*. The book's subtitle asks *What is sovereignty*, so I will have students look up the definition of this word and put it in their vocabulary journal. Once they have done this, we will have a class discussion about what the word means, and talk about some of their picture definitions of the word, as it applies to them. This is where we may talk about their rights or what they feel is the lack thereof, as they make their way through middle school and the countless rules in school buildings, or in their remote learning settings.

#### *Exit Ticket*

Students will make another Journey post to this question: *Why do you think the concept of sovereignty is so important to many Native people? What is one example from our reading today of how they have reclaimed sovereignty?*

Day Four: Exploring Recent Sovereignty Issues/Dakota Access Pipeline

#### *Reading and Class Discussions*

Today we will look at Dunbar-Ortiz's chapter ten: "Indigenous Action, Indigenous Rights," and the Conclusion, "Water is Life: Indigenous Resistance in the Twenty-First Century," to learn about Native Americans' continuing fights to reclaim their own lands. While we will not have time to delve deeply into both chapters, we will start by looking at parts of chapter ten, particularly pages 176-186 and 189-193, which details Indigenous political activism of the 1960s, including the occupation of Alcatraz and fishing rights in the Northwest, and the siege at Wounded Knee in 1973. Again, these topics are ones that students likely have not studied when they learn about the Civil Rights era of the 1960s.

We will stop here to have a class discussion about history focused around the questions of *Who teaches us history?* and why they think they have not previously learned about these events. What are some possible reasons they can think of for Native rights and events not being included in their history lessons? Is there anything they can do to change this?

I will then ask students to do an Internet search on their Chromebooks with the following keywords: *Supreme Court ruling Mount Rushmore*, and give them a couple minutes to tell me what they found. Did the Sioux tribes accept the money awarded to them in 1980? Why not?<sup>43</sup> How has the concept of *sovereignty* come into play in this particular issue?

#### *Reading and Journey posting*

Dunbar-Ortiz's last chapter, "Water is Life," addresses the recent activities and protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) from 2014-17. After reading about and defining the issues surrounding DAPL and why it galvanized Indigenous peoples from around the world, students will log on to Journey and answer the following question: *How did sovereignty and past treaty violations impact the DAPL protests?*

#### *Exit Ticket/Homework*

If there is time, students can make another Journey posting as an Exit Ticket, or can complete this question as homework: *Do an Internet search for "Supreme Court 2020 Oklahoma ruling."*<sup>44</sup> *Make a prediction: What is one way you think this court ruling may increase sovereignty for the tribes of eastern Oklahoma?*

#### Day Five: Documentary and final Journey postings

##### *Documentary*

Today we will watch the documentary *And Now We Rise: A Portrait of Samuel Johns*<sup>45</sup> about Samuel Johns, the young Indigenous man from Alaska, who has had a huge impact on his local Indigenous community, traveled to DAPL, and also writes and performs his

own rap/hip hop music with the stage name Rebel.<sup>46</sup> This documentary is about 57 minutes long, so if teachers have a 60-minute class, they can assign additional questions as homework, either on Journey or Schoology (or any additional learning platform they are using).

Before we watch the documentary, I will ask students to keep this idea in mind: *How has Samuel Johns changed his narrative over the course of his life?*

### *Journey posting*

Now that we have watched the documentary, I will ask students to post on Journey in response to the following questions: *What are some things Native Americans have done to change their narrative? How does narrative change lead to social change?* Students may also incorporate some of Johns' music clips into their posting (they are easily found on YouTube).

As stated earlier, it is my hope that students will be able to use these Indigenous models and examples of social justice movements in our upcoming recycling unit, as well as think about their own narratives and how they can rewrite them at any time in their lives. How can we, as a school community, persist and resist to effect changes that could benefit everyone? How can they do this for themselves, as they move through adolescence and adulthood?

### **Resources**

“ACCESS for ELLs.” WIDA. Accessed October 10, 2020.

<https://wida.wisc.edu/assess/access>. Explanation of the ACCESS for ELLS test.

“ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 Online Speaking Guidance Grades 6-12.” Accessed October 10,

2020, <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/ACCESS-Online-Speaking-Guidance-Gr-6-12.pdf>. How to help ELLs understand the Speaking test.

“AK Rebel – Rise feat. Junya, Ayyu, Byron Nicholai (Music Video).” YouTube.

Accessed December 6, 2020.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0a1nsArWQYQ>.

“Art as a Tool for Teachers of English Language Learners.” Accessed October 10,

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## Appendix

Implementing District Standards, Common Core State Standards, and WIDA English Language Development Standards

### *Common Core State Standards*

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2:* Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.<sup>47</sup>

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.7:* Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.<sup>48</sup>

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.5:* Integrate multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and add interest.<sup>49</sup>

*CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1.A:* Come to discussions prepared, having read or researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence on the topic, text, or issue to probe, and reflect on ideas under discussion.<sup>50</sup>

Thoughtful and respectful discussions are an integral part of eighth grade ELA classes, as students prepare to increasingly work on group projects and have partners in high school. They are expected to learn how to conduct discourse in a civil, considerate manner, even when they may disagree with a classmate. Students will be discussing and exchanging views on each other's projects during the entire process, and will need to learn to do so thoughtfully and politely.

### *Colonial School District ELA Speaking and Listening standards:*

Students will gain, evaluate, and present increasingly complex information, ideas, and evidence through listening and speaking, as well as through media, and integrate skills related to media use (both critical analysis and production of media).

The WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards for Listening and Reading and Speaking and Writing that I will utilize include compound, complex grammatical constructions (e.g., multiple phrases and clauses); a broad range of sentence patterns characteristic of particular content areas; rich descriptive discourse with complex sentences; and organized, cohesive and coherent expression of ideas.

### Notes

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