

Chapter 4

Dislocation/ Relocation

(17:02 minutes)

Synopsis

This 17-minute video describes the boarding school experience of Native American children during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. To fulfill their assimilationist mission, these schools undermined Indian culture while insisting on the superiority of non-Indian culture. The video traces the effects of the boarding schools on Indian children and Indian culture and their lingering legacy in Montana.

► The video begins with students giving their best answer to the question: **“What do you think of when you hear the term ‘boarding school?’”** Teachers may wish to ask their students the same question before viewing the episode.

The narrator answers the focus question:

“Boarding schools were part of an ‘assimilation strategy’ that existed on, near and far removed from reservations. Boarding schools often separated students from their families and cultural traditions. Further to strip Indian children of their heritage, many boarding schools invoked extreme practices. The boarding-school experience still casts a long shadow over the lives and the culture[s] of many Montana Indians.”

Post-viewing Discussion Questions

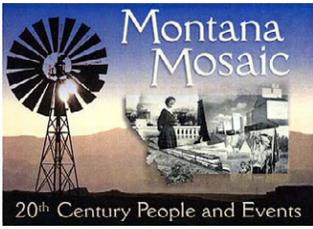
Engage students’ critical thinking skills and elicit their emotional responses with the following four questions, most easily remembered through the acronym DICE: What **disturbed** you? What **interested** you? What **confused** you? What **enlightened** you?

“Getting at the Meaning” Questions

1. Based on what you saw in the video, what does the placement of boarding schools away from the reservations suggest about the schools’ goals?
2. How did the education that Indian children received at boarding schools reinforce or contradict what they learned from their parents and their tribes?
3. What problems/struggles might a boarding school student face on his or her return home?
4. What long-term repercussions of the boarding school era can still be seen in Montana today?
5. Do you think the video presented a balanced view of boarding schools? Why or why not?

Vocabulary Terms

Assimilation: a United States government policy that began late in the 19th century. Under this policy, the government systematically tried to dissolve Indian tribes and to absorb Indian people into mainstream society. Instead of isolating Native Americans on reservations, the assimilation policy’s objective was to destroy traditional Native American culture and tribal affiliations and to integrate Indian individuals into Euro-American society. The division of reservations into allotments was also intended to weaken tribal identity.



(Chapter 4, continued)

Additional Resources

For more information on topics addressed in this episode, see *Montana: Stories of the Land*, Chapter 11, “The Early Reservation Years, 1880–1920” (<http://mhs.mt.gov/education/textbook/Chapter11/Chapter11.asp>).

Indian Education for All, A History and Foundation of American Indian Education Policy, by Stan Juneau (Helena, MT, 2001): 20–28, available online at http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/IndianEd/Resources/History_FoundationAmIndianPolicy.pdf.

Content Standards

This chapter of *Montana Mosaic* aligns to the Montana Social Studies Content Standards and the Essential Understandings regarding Montana Indians (EU) as follows: 1.2, 2.6, 4.2, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, EU 5, EU 6