

-Tribes of Dakota- Urban Indians

Supporting Lakota values like "igloo-OHH nee-aww", which is conducting yourself with honor, may be easier when surrounded by rich cultures that are alive on the state's reservations. But, the poor conditions and unemployment rates of up to 80% push Native Americans off reservations and toward urban areas. Census numbers show nationwide that 60 percent of tribal members now live off reservations.

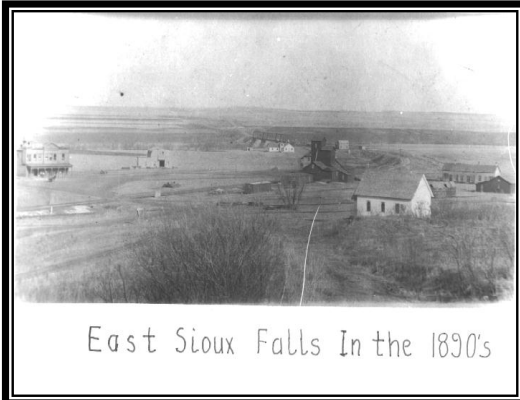
[\(Native Americans\)](#)



Oglala Sioux Nation Pow Wow

[-U.S. Census Bureau](#)

Native Americans like Wayne Starboy of Sioux Falls commented that leaving the reservation means exchanging one set of problems for another. The impact of racism is a common theme among many who move off the reservation.



East Sioux Falls In the 1890's

Courtesy of the S.D. State Historical Society



**Listen to the following in
your classroom.**

[Urban Indians \(13:11\)](#)

By Johanna Sailor



Reflection, Research, and Discussion (discuss one or all of the following)

1. Wayne Starboy commented "Racism is there, you always have to live with it; I still live it today." Do you feel this is an isolated incident or is racism still present in South Dakota today?

Times have changed, even over the past twenty to thirty years. In the past, more people seemed to be vocal about their negative views of Native Americans. Have negative attitudes toward Native Americans changed or has a taboo formed that discourages our society from talking about racial feelings?

For more information about racism in South Dakota, click on the following.

[Race Relations](#): Forum, March 3, 2004

[Racism](#): Forum, January 21, 2003

[Race Relations](#): Forum, Dec 16, 2003

2. What is racism and how does it form in a society? How can racism in the future be prevented?

-Tribes of Dakota-

Urban Indians Continued



3. Have you ever witnessed or experienced racism when you were at a restaurant, a store, or even at your school? How did the racism toward another person or yourself make you feel? Could the racism have been prevented?

4. Recently, I was returning from Pierre and noticed a Native American family stranded on the side of the

Interstate. As I pulled up, I knew my grandmother would have been appalled that I stopped. She was biased towards Native Americans her entire life. I even remember having to leave an area of a restaurant because a Native American family sat close to us.

I feel her inability to feel compassion, understanding and respect for Native Americans was based on ignorance of the culture and history of Native American relations in South Dakota. Today, more is known about Native American history, culture, hardships and struggles, but there continues to be racism. How can racism toward Native Americans and others be eliminated completely?



5. Many schools across South Dakota are battling high Native American dropout rates. In Rapid City, between 60-80% of Native American students are not graduated from high school. What can be done to reduce these alarming dropout rates?



Try This

1. "Differences or Misunderstandings?"

The following activity is a great way to reinforce the fact that racism toward Native Americans is unjustified. Your students will realize that there are very minute differences between different groups.

Use the provided student form or a chalk/white board to complete the following activity. Have your students brainstorm, discuss, and record differences and similarities between a Native American student and a Caucasian student. A few examples have been provided on the included form.

By the end of the brainstorming session, there will be a few differences listed, but the list for similarities is endless. Your students should realize the list they developed would be no different for other groups.

2. Have a "Cultural Appreciation Day" in class. Each student should bring photos, clothing, food, etc., that represent their unique family culture, whether they are Czechoslovakian, German, Mexican, or Native American. This is a great opportunity for your students to learn to respect and understand other cultures. All cultures have special foods, clothing and traditions. The similarities between cultures will be evident to your students.

**"Differences or Misunderstandings"
Student Form**

Similarities

Unique Culture

Have Lungs

Like Sports

Enjoy Family Time

Like To Cruise Around

Differences

Color of Skin (Melanin Amount)

