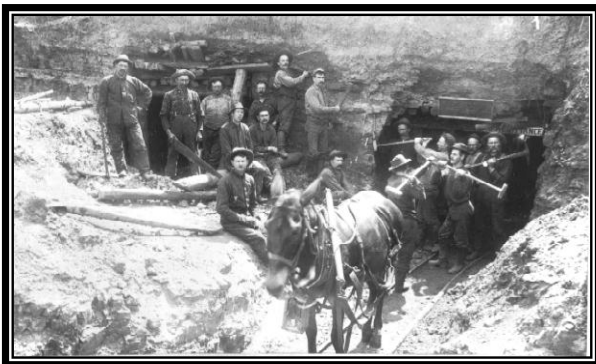


-Tribes of Dakota- Flandreau Reservation: Casinos

On a chilly September morning, groups of Flandreau kids are playing outside the local elementary school. These first grade students may not realize it, but the reading assignments they will be doing later today are thanks in part to proceeds from the Royal River Casino.



Just a couple of miles from the school sits a three level building the size of 2 football fields. The Royal River Casino houses a restaurant, a hotel conference rooms, a gambling hall, and a concert venue. Flandreau Public Schools Superintendent Rick Weber says this casino is helping keep the school system afloat.



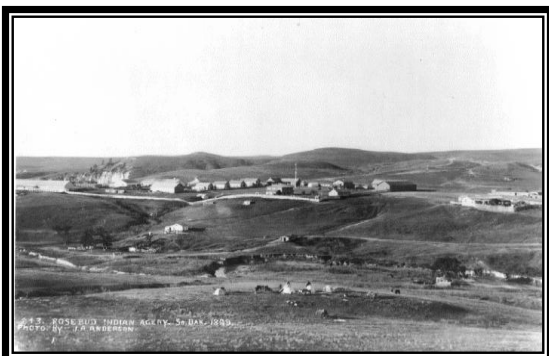
**Listen to the following in
your classroom.**

[Casinos \(8:55\)](#)

By Chuck Beck

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

1. Some of the reservations offer little opportunity for any type of self-sustained economic development. Over the years, Native Americans have been relocated and isolated to areas that offer few natural resources or opportunities. For example, rich farmland and land with gold were taken once their discovery was known or more land was needed for settlement. Are there other opportunities left for the Native Americans? Imagine you are an economic developer and you must provide opportunities for a reservation in South Dakota. What suggestions do you have?



Rosebud Indian Agency
Courtesy of the S.D. State Historical Society

-Tribes of Dakota -

Flandreau Reservation: Casinos Continued

2. A myth persists that Native Americans receive a monthly check from the government for being Indian. According to Jace De'Cory, professor of Indian Studies at Black Hills State University, this is not true. Although, Native Americans are some of the poorest people in the nation, so some may benefit from programs like WIC or the USDA commodities program.

For more information about the economic status of Native Americans in S.D., click on the following site. - [SD Business Review, June 2003](#).

Click on the following link for more information about the economic status of Native Americans - [US Census Bureau](#).

Click on the following Dakota Digest to learn more about a proposed expansion of the Royal Rive Casino on the Flandreau Reservation ([more](#)).

Click on the following Forum to learn more about economic development on Native American Reservations ([more](#)).

Sam Allen, Economic Development Coordinator of the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe, commented that funds from the casino help pay for things like education and roads. He also added that "the tribe has been able to do away with commodities, which is a USDA food distribution program; we no longer have that, which is good. Our unemployment rate is one percent which is good; everybody is working. We also did away with the WIC program so the tribe is better off with gaming." Do you feel the benefits provided by revenue from casino gambling outweigh the negative impact of gambling addiction?



Try This

(Research project - possible group assignment)



Plowing - Courtesy of the S.D. State Historical Society

"Economic Development"

The students should select one of the reservations or tribal lands in South Dakota. The students should then research the economic status of the group selected, the natural resources available to the group, the physical location, rivers, etc, and any other pertinent information for an economic development plan.

The students should then develop an economic development improvement plan for the selected group. This could be as simple as developing one realistic business or industry for the group selected or this could be a more in-depth multifaceted plan that includes multiple businesses working together. A presentation should be developed that includes posters, figures, graphs, models, etc. (use your discretion based on available time).

[Click on the following Dakota Digest to learn more about a proposed expansion of the Royal Rive Casino on the Flandreau Reservation.](#)

[Click on the following Forum to learn more about economic development on Native American Reservations.](#)

