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Teaching the History of Native American Pandemics to Highlight the Effects of Racial Discrimination in Indigenous Communities

David Childs^a, April Eddie^a, and Jarrod Druery^a

^aNorthern Kentucky University

Abstract

As experts and politicians debate the best approaches to combatting the coronavirus, low income communities of color and Native Americans continue to experience the worse effects of the pandemic. Even before the advent of COVID-19, epidemics have ravaged populations in the developing world and in Indigenous communities, but inadequate attention has been devoted to assisting them. It is society's inferior view of communities of color and Native Americans that causes them to be neglected by the federal government when it comes to resource distribution. Throughout the history of the United States this racial prejudice and discrimination against American Indians has been a common reality. Discrimination manifests itself in school curriculum, in that many US history texts do not include the study of the history and culture of indigenous people. But social studies educators can counter this by offering a more multicultural curriculum. Using James Banks' transformation approach this essay will discuss how social studies classrooms can combat racial discrimination by showing history from a non-traditional perspective, highlighting the impact of pandemics on Native American communities, and closes with a sample unit plan for teaching the topic.

Keywords: pandemics, Native Americans, multicultural curriculum, social studies

The smallpox was always present, filling the churchyards with corpses, tormenting with constant fears all whom it had stricken, leaving on those whose lives it spared the hideous traces of its power, turning the babe into a changeling at which the mother shuddered, and making the eyes and cheeks of the bighearted maiden objects of horror to the lover.

—Thomas Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II*

A few years ago this opening passage about the scourge of the nineteenth century smallpox pandemic may have seemed foreign to US citizens. But now the dangers of widespread disease are all too familiar as the number of coronavirus cases and deaths continue to rise. The idea of a pandemic has become a part of everyday reality in the United States of America.

As experts and politicians debate the best approaches to combatting this modern pandemic, low income communities of color and Native Americans continue to experience the worse effects of the coronavirus (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020). Even before the advent of the coronavirus, epidemics have ravaged populations in the developing world and in Indigenous communities, but inadequate attention has been devoted to assisting them (Ross, 2020). Indeed, only those in Western society and wealthy nations seem to get proper resources to combat the virus. This has been the case in the United States as it relates to Native Americans and COVID-19. For example, the Navajo nation has been hit especially hard and not enough attention has been given to this crisis. COVID-19 cases have increased at an alarming rate in that community because of inadequate resources given to combat the disease (In Numbers: COVID-19 Across the Navajo Nation, 2020). While at the same time, states like New York that have been especially hard hit by the coronavirus have gotten ample resources and assistance from the federal government (Cuomo, 2020). It is society's inferior view of communities of color and Native Americans that causes them to be neglected by the federal government when it comes to resource distribution. Throughout the history of the United States this racial prejudice and discrimination against American Indians has been a common reality.

Schools can play a key role in combatting this racial discrimination. Much of the social studies curriculum in the United States has not included the study of the history and culture of Indigenous people (Vaught, 2011; Wong, 2015; Yacovone, 2018; Zimmerman, 2004). On the one hand, in-depth historical content about Native Americans and other minoritized groups has been absent from US textbooks; on the other hand, material that privileges European American culture and ideology has been prominent in US classrooms (Speed, 2015). That is why the role social studies educators play in implementing a multicultural curriculum cannot be overstated (Banks, 1999).

When educators teach the history of pandemics in Native communities, it can help students get a fuller picture of US history and combat current discrimination against Native Americans and other Black and Brown communities. Using James Banks' (1999) transformation approach this essay will discuss how social studies classrooms can combat racial discrimination by showing history from a non-traditional perspective, highlighting the impact of pandemics on Native American communities. The first section of this article will outline and discuss James Banks' four dimensions of multicultural education. The second section will build upon Banks' transformation approach, to highlight the impact COVID-19 has had on Indigenous communities, focusing on the inappropriate response by the US government. The third section will briefly examine a non-traditional perspective in studying pandemics, leading into the fourth section that will offer a historical survey of widespread disease throughout the history of Native Americans in the Americas. This will help us put contemporary conversations about COVID-19 and Native American communities within a historical context. In the appendix of this article we offer a unit plan outlining ways this material can be used in social studies middle and secondary classrooms.

An Effective Multicultural Curriculum

It is important that schools strive toward developing a more inclusive curriculum that goes beyond simply patronizing people of color. James Banks (1999) offers four levels of multicultural curricular reform that is effective and meaningful and integrates more diverse perspectives and social justice into the lesson.

The first level is Banks' (1999) *contributions approach*. This approach is very common in many classrooms throughout the US, but requires the least amount of effort out of the four approaches. With this curricular approach, teachers make no real effort to integrate diverse perspectives into the lesson. Also called the "Heroes and Holidays" approach, teachers often incorporate books and other material that highlight famous people, holidays and special events from various cultures (Zarillo, 2011, p. 122). A common example of this approach is when students learn about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on his birthday. Other popular people and events from this approach might include readings on Harriet Tubman and Rosa Parks as well as discussion of holidays such as Cinco de Mayo or Kwanza (Banks, 1999). But the key to this approach is that these prominent figures and special events are merely mentioned, and no changes are made to the overall curriculum.

Banks' (1999) second level is the *additive approach*. This is an improvement upon the contributions approach. Teachers that implement this strategy are intentional about developing a more multicultural curriculum. With the additive approach, diverse content and perspectives are added to lessons, but no change is made to the basic structure. Zarillo (2011) points out that "the units of study change only in that content is added to include multicultural perspectives" (p.123). Curriculum that uses this approach would integrate material by and about people from diverse cultures into the unit without any structural change. Examples might include adding cultural diversity to the traditional Thanksgiving story by exploring the Native American history and culture related to the holiday (Banks, 1999). Another example of this approach includes incorporating a unit on the Civil Rights movement into a larger study of modern US history.

The *transformation approach* presents an overhaul of sorts to the entire curriculum. The key aspect of this approach is that it gives students the opportunity to view social studies topics from multiple perspectives, thus giving them a more in-depth understanding of the material (Banks, 1999). The curriculum is revised to have students look at social studies from multiple perspectives to get a fuller picture of the world. For example, if a teacher was doing a unit on slavery, they might find primary sources that discuss the history from the perspective of slaves (e.g. slave narratives) in addition to reading sources written by slave masters. Then students could compare sources to arrive at a fairer and more balanced picture of history. Another example is middle school students could study what life is like for seventh graders in southern China. Students could compare their lives to their Chinese peers. There are also wonderful digital pen pal projects that one could develop using this approach.

The last approach is the *social action* approach. Zarillo (2011) points out that “this approach combines the transformation approach with activities to strive for social change” (p. 124). Students can go beyond just looking at history from multiple perspectives as an academic exercise and put their work to action. For example, after completing a unit on the Civil Rights movement, students can become involved in non-profit organizations in their community that address social needs of people of color. They can even be involved in teacher-led volunteerism in their neighborhoods (Banks, 1999).

Often middle and high school history classes privilege the impact of diseases on western civilization and on White settlers in North America. The examples of disease outbreaks in Western nations are plentiful including the bubonic plague in the middle ages, the New World smallpox epidemic of 1520, the Yellow Fever outbreak in the US of the 1800’s and more recently the Spanish flu of 1918. While it is important to understand the impact of pandemics in Western society, in the tradition of Bank’s work it is also important to learn about underrepresented groups in history as well. We can get a fuller and more accurate picture of history when we study it from multiple perspective. With the transformation approach in mind we will offer a brief historical discussion of the impact of diseases on Indigenous populations in North America.

The Impact of Disease and Pandemics on Indigenous Populations

Much of the public response to the novel coronavirus has been focused on the effects of the disease on Western nations. As it stands, in our world, White lives are valued more than those in minoritized communities (Pew Research Center [PRC], 2016). Using the transformational approach, we can shift lenses and look at how the coronavirus has affected Native American communities.

In the ultra-conservative political environment of 2020, the problems in Native Americans communities seem to have been exasperated, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Minoritized individuals that identify as Black, Brown or Native American have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic because of inequitable responses from authorities (CDC, 2020).

Discrimination against Native Americans can be noted in how resources are allocated to Indigenous people in the US. In this way, relief efforts in response to the novel coronavirus came to Native Americans as an afterthought and often after much political pressure (United Nations, 2020). Indeed, a recent report from the CDC states that “American Indian and Alaska Native people have suffered a disproportionate burden of COVID-19 illness during the pandemic” (CDC, 2020). As of December 2020, coronavirus cases on the Navajo Nation grew to 16,711 out of a population of nearly 174,000. At least 656 people have died on the reservation since February 2020 (In Numbers: COVID-19 across the Navajo Nation, 2020), which is consistent with Lakhani’s (2020) report that the Navajo had the highest infection rate in the United States.

These issues have come about as a result of racial discrimination toward Native American tribes in the US. In order to combat this, Writer (2008) using the philosophical lens of Tribal Critical Race Theory (TribalCrit) argues that one must “unmask, expose, and confront continued colonization within educational contexts and societal structures, thus transforming those contexts and structures for Indigenous Peoples” (p. 2).

As Writer (2008) pointed out, Native American society has been decimated by the ugly legacy of colonization and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted, even amplified a longstanding racial caste in our society. Native Americans of course recognize the familiarity of COVID-19 devastating their communities. In this way Lakhani (2020) states:

The coronavirus is novel to the world, but the impact on Native communities is anything but a new experience. Native Americans feared the worst because they’ve been here before many times. European colonizers introduced, sometimes deliberately, an array of new infectious diseases including measles, cholera, typhoid and smallpox, which for many decades historians believed were solely responsible for killing more than 70% of native people who had no immunity to these deadly foreign germs (p.1).

Thus, as was stated in the passage above, widespread disease is nothing new in Native American communities. Banks’ transformation approach calls for educators to take a unique perspective on historical topics. In the next sections we will continue to use this approach to briefly examine a non-traditional perspective in studying pandemics and then go into a historical discussion about the impact of widespread disease on Native American communities in history.

Most of the major diseases that have caused pandemics in the Americas originated in the Old World (Crosby, 1976; Nunn & Qian, 2010). Because Native Americans had very limited contact with groups outside of North and South America, the development and spread of deadly diseases was limited (Kelton, 2007; Martin & Goodman, 2002). With the arrival of Europeans in the Americas, diseases from the Old World devastated entire tribes. Native Americans were not previously exposed to most diseases brought to the continents by European colonists, they had not built immunities to those bacteria and viruses. Europe served as a crossroads between many different peoples. Through constant warfare throughout the continent and interactions along the Silk Road from the East, Europeans developed immunity to a large variety of diseases (Hansen, 2012). In this way, the diseases Europeans brought to the Americas, decimated Native populations but had little effect on Europeans (Larcombe, 2005). A phenomenon called the virgin soil epidemic (Crosby, 1976; Jones, 2003; Rice, 2014). Koch et al. (2018) outline the devastation diseases brought to precolonial America. They state that there was:

unprecedented mortality rates after European arrival. Existing evidence suggests that the indigenous population collapse was primarily caused by the introduction of pathogens unknown to the American continent (“virgin soil epidemics”) together with warfare and slavery. Part of a wider Columbian Exchange of once-separate continental fauna and flora, these epidemics were introduced by European settlers and African slaves and were

passed on to an indigenous population that had not been previously exposed to these pathogens and therefore did not initially possess suitable antibodies. Such diseases included smallpox, measles, influenza, the bubonic plague, and later malaria, diphtheria, typhus and cholera” (pp. 20-21).

These diseases brought unspeakable destruction to Native communities, often wiping out entire villages (Robertson, 2001). Like COVID-19 in modern times, many of the Europeans that carried diseases were asymptomatic and thus did not realize they were spreading the diseases (Liu et al., 2021).

There is at least one case of the British intentionally exposing Native Americans to disease. In the Ohio country they gave blankets to the Natives as gifts that had come from their smallpox infirmary. Many scholars argue that this is the first instance of biological warfare in the US (Fenn, 2000; McConnel, 1997; Ranlet, 2000). Barras & Greub (2014) point out that this biological attack on Natives did not have its intended effects, stating that “in the light of contemporary knowledge, it remains doubtful whether... [The British] hopes were fulfilled, given the fact that the transmission of smallpox through this kind of vector is much less efficient than respiratory transmission, and that Native Americans had been in contact with smallpox” (p. 499). This early biological attack was consistent with the legacy of imperialism, colonialism and racial violence against Native Americans. With the imperialist mindset Europeans felt entitled to Native land and tried to obtain it by any means necessary, even if that meant implementing biological warfare.

The Plains Indians Struck Hard by Widespread Disease

Some tribes were hit especially hard by disease through much of their history. That is, widespread disease had an impact on specific Indigenous peoples in different ways. The Plains Indians were ravaged by disease in the nineteenth century (Ostler, 2004; Sundstrum, 1997). Between 1837 and 1870, at least four different epidemics struck the tribes in the plains. It was such an issue that the Plains Indians began to avoid Europeans when they learned that they were the source of the diseases (Kelton, 2004). However, Europeans had valuable goods and resources that Indians relied on such as metal pots, skillets, and knives. Thus, the allure of trade was too great and they traded with the Europeans eventually and spread disease throughout their villages (Daschuk, 2013; Taylor, 1982).

Native Cultural Practices and the Spread of Disease

Native cultural practices and their way of life contributed to the rapid spread of disease in their communities. For example, they placed much emphasis on visitation of their sick, which led to the rapid spread of illness through continual contact. Native religious cultural practices also increased their exposure to disease. Many believed that sickness was caused by magic and sorcery and that if the body was not protected properly by the spirits they were susceptible to diseases. This increased their exposure to these diseases (Robertson, 2001). They often called on

religious practitioners known as shamans to cure them of illnesses. Shaman healers used practices and rituals that involved continual close human contact. Lyon (1998) in describing some these practices stated, "Healing often involves driving out an evil spirit from the body of a patient" (p.14). One practice of the Shaman was to have

the patient laid out on the floorboards. He then walked about the patient, examining him from all angles. Then he might touch the patient about the spot where the pain lay. He licked his hands, then rubbed them over the painful area. Some shamans blew on the affected part, occasionally sucking at it tentatively at first if the case was diagnosed as one of (object) intrusion (Lyon, 1998, p.15).

These beliefs only allowed the diseases to proliferate even more.

Depopulation

The introduction of Old World diseases brought great depopulation to many Native tribes. On average many Native Americans lost 25–50% of their tribe to illness (Pearson, 2003). The Native population before the arrival of Cortés' invasion was estimated to be between 25-30 million in Mexico. However, half a century later the population was reduced to just three million, largely due to infectious diseases brought by the Spanish. In 1520 there were 700,000 Native Americans in Florida. However, by 1700 the number was reduced to 2,000 because of widespread disease (Cowley, 1991; Koch et al., 2019). Disease affected smaller tribes in a greater way, as epidemics often brought certain tribes to the brink of extinction.

Smallpox

Given the name the running face sickness by the Lakota Indians, smallpox was the most devastating disease brought from the Old World by Europeans (Ostler, 2004; Stearn & Stearn, 1945; Robertson, 2001). The disease was lethal to many Native Americans, bringing sweeping epidemics and affecting the same tribes repeatedly. The first well-documented smallpox epidemic happened in 1518. A smallpox epidemic struck the Huron Natives in 1639 in the St. Lawrence and Great Lakes regions through traders from Quebec (Jones, 2003; Jones, 2004). Disease cut the Huron population in half, going from 18,000 people in 1634 to nearly 9,000 just about five years later. In the 1770s, smallpox wiped out an estimated 30% of the West Coast Native Americans. A decade later in the 1880's the same disease devastated the Plains Indians (Hopkins, 1983). McIntyre and Houston (1999) point out that, "In the west, the worst and most widespread smallpox epidemic came north from the Missouri River in the summer of 1781. It reached susceptible aboriginal people... along the Saskatchewan River by the end of the year" (p. 21). As a result of the smallpox outbreak the federal government of the United States established a smallpox vaccination program for Native Americans in 1832. In their 1839 report The Commissioner of Indian Affairs discussed the casualties of the 1837 Great Plains smallpox epidemic. They stated that:

No attempt has been made to count the victims, nor is it possible to reckon them in any of these tribes with accuracy; it is believed that if [the number 17,200 for the upper Missouri River Indians] was doubled, the aggregate would not be too large for those who have fallen east of the Rocky Mountains” (Stearn & Stearn, 1945).

Widespread disease and depopulation have had a lasting effect on Native communities throughout history. The division of labor and interdependence that was indicative of Native culture has been greatly impacted by the epidemics. Fewer people were available to hunt, plant crops, and or support their community in other ways. Loss of cultural knowledge transfer also impacted the population (Hopkins, 1983). Scholars have noted this impact even up to the present day, with many tribes having populations that have been reduced by 90% or even sadly no longer in existence as a result of pandemics (Lopatin, 1940).

Conclusion

What Can We Learn?

The transformation approach allows educators to shift perspectives on historical analysis or in other social science and humanities disciplines in order to expand the curriculum. This can help the learner gain a deeper understanding of the topic. Within the context of this essay, studying the history of widespread diseases from the perspective of Native Americans can be helpful in combatting racial stereotypes and discrimination as it can perhaps create empathy, allowing Westerners to see American Indians and other minoritized people as human. As we have stated, the impact of pandemics in the past on indigenous people can help us understand their struggles in the present with diseases like COVID-19.

Teachers can highlight these discussions in their social studies classrooms during US and World history units. A robust and well-rounded multicultural curriculum that builds upon Banks’ framework can help students understand that a version of history that privileges White males is an intellectually dishonest portrayal of the past. Educators can help students understand how things that happened in the past in Native American history affects the present.

It is important to reiterate the importance of historical studies to help shed light on systemic racism and to also come up with effective solutions. In particular, it is important to be reminded that widespread disease is nothing new to Native communities. When we are reminded of the racial prejudice the indigenous people endured, we can be equipped to fight modern prejudices of all kinds, leading the way for our students. Sensoy and DiAngelo (2018) urge us to critique the notion that Whiteness is the standard and that all other races are deviant. The bias and discrimination they highlight has been the view of many Americans and even textbook curricula. We provide a unit plan (see Appendix) that will help social studies educators engage in a meaningful and thoughtful study of Native American history and culture with their students, tying the past to the present.

Dr. David Childs is Associate Professor of Social Studies and History at Northern Kentucky University (NKU). He earned a Masters degree in US History and another in Social Studies Education at Miami University of Ohio. He also earned his Ph.D. in Education and history at Miami. His historical fiction novel entitled *Escaping from Home: A Novel about Slavery and Freedom* will be published in early 2021. He writes a weekly column for Democracy and Me on civics and US history. Please contact Dr. Childs at childsd1@nku.edu.

April Eddie, Ph.D., is a former special education teacher. She is currently the inaugural Diversity Faculty Fellow and the Diversity and Equity Coordinator at Northern Kentucky University's College of Education, Highland Heights, Kentucky. Email eddieal@nku.edu.

Dr. Jarrod E. Druery is an Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership at Northern Kentucky University. Dr. Druery's research is focused on the experiences of Black, Brown, and Indigenous People in education, as well as the impact of racism on these communities. Dr. Druery has 10 years of experience in higher education as both a practitioner and a scholar. Email: drueryj1@nku.edu.

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Appendix: Sample Unit Plan

Title: Disease and Pandemics in Native American History

Introduction to the Unit

This unit can be taught as either a stand-alone unit or as part of a larger unit in US or world history. Native American history expands outside of US history and has roots long before the establishment of the United States of America. This unit plan is designed for middle school through high school usage. It can be adjusted depending on the grade level or topic one is teaching. Language arts teachers can collaborate with social studies teachers by integrating fiction or non-fiction texts surrounding Native American history and culture. The unit is aligned with the National Council for the Social Studies' (2010) Ten Thematic standards and the Common Core State Standards (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council for Chief State School Officers, 2020) for literacy. We have allotted ten days for the unit below, but it can be expanded or contracted depending on classroom needs.

NCSS (2010) Ten Thematic Standards:

Culture (Standard 1) Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

Time, Continuity, and Change (Standard 2) Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

People, Places, and Environments (Standard 3) Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

Common Core State Standards (2020) for Literacy:

Middle Grades

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Secondary

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of

information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

State Social Studies Standards

Because the unit covers a broad range of material, it can be easily aligned with the three State Social Studies Standards of Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. For example, the objectives align with Kentucky's eighth grade social studies standard 8.G.MM.1 Geography Standard and 8.H.CH.1 History Standard (Kentucky Department of Education [KDE], 2019). Standard 8.G.MM.1 states that lessons should help “Interpret how political, environmental, social and economic factors led to both forced and voluntary migration in the United States from the Colonial Era to Reconstruction from 1600-1877.” Standard 8.H.CH.1 states “Explain the role changing political, social and economic perspectives had on the lives of diverse groups of people in the Colonial Era.” Both would align with the study of Native American history and culture. Various Ohio and Indiana middle grades and secondary social studies standards also can be easily tied into this unit.

Unit Objectives and Assessments

Day One through Five Objectives:

Content Objectives

1. Students will be able to discuss and write about what life was like for various Native American tribes in the mid to late 1800’s.
2. Students will be able to compare the impact of pandemics throughout Native American history to the effects of COVID-19 on Native Americans.
3. Students will be able to compare and contrast the life and customs of various Native tribes in order to challenge the myth that they are one homogenous people group.

Process Objective

1. After reading several primary and secondary sources, participating in interactive lectures with the instructor and watching film clips on Native Americans in the 1800s, students will be able to discuss and write about what life was like for various Native American tribes in the mid to late 1800’s.
2. Students will read the texts *Rotting Face: Smallpox and the American Indian* and *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee* and other non-fiction primary and secondary sources to be able to describe what life was like for Native Americans in the mid to late 1800s.

Value Objective

Students will use their understanding of racial prejudice and discrimination against Native Americans to combat prejudices in contemporary times.

Day One through Five Assessments:

Reflection and Discussion

As students do the readings, they will write reflections discussing the everyday life of Native Americans and the impact of widespread disease on their lives based on what they learned from the texts. Student understanding of contemporary Native American culture and discrimination they receive will be strengthened as they also learn and *write about* what life was like for them prior to the twentieth century. Students can focus on items such as Native cuisine, hobbies and entertainment, treatment by white society, assimilation into white society, family structure, courtship, childhood, occupations, religion and values, dwelling places and everyday tasks and responsibilities. Students can strengthen their understanding by consulting primary sources such as treatise with US officials, analyzing Native constitutions, reading narratives and letters and secondary sources that describe the daily lives of Native Americans prior to the twentieth century.

Lesson Opener: BrainPOP Video Opener and Assessments

Middle grades educators can begin their lesson with a BrainPOP (2020) video with several options for assessments embedded into the online resource. Students can view the vast collection of BrainPop videos on Native American history and Culture. Good examples of BrainPop (2020) videos to include in the lesson would be *Wounded Knee Massacre* (<https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/woundedkneemassacre/>) and the *Seminole Wars* (<https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/seminolewars/>).

Interactive Lecture

The instructor should share information with the class about the life of various Native American tribes prior to the twentieth century making reference to the effect of widespread disease on their lives through history. The instructor should integrate images, interactive Internet resources, videos and films to make the lecture more engaging. Discussion questions that tie it into the book will also be used to help the students be more engaged in the lesson.

Select Films to Supplement the Study of the Native American History and Culture

Many films portray Native Americans in a stereotypical light and should be viewed in advance for their instructional merit. These films can be used to highlight discussions about past and present racial discrimination against Native communities. The films listed below are a mere fraction of the number of films available for classroom use on the topic. Many can be found for free on Youtube.

Apache (1994); Apache Drums At Risk (2010); Barking Water (2009); Battle Cry (1955); Battles

of Chief Pontiac (1952); Big Sky (1952); Broken Arrow (1950); Buffalo Bill and the Indians (1976); Sitting Bull (1954); Buffalo Dance (1894); Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee (2007); Dances with Wolves (1990); The Dark Wind (1991); Daughter of Dawn (1992); Davy Crockett, King of the Wild Frontier (1955); Dead Man (1995); The Doe Boy (2001); DreamKeeper (2003); The Last of His Tribe (1992); Island of the Blue Dolphins (1964); The Last of the Mohicans (1992).

Day Six through Nine Objectives:

Content Objectives

1. After reading the primary and secondary sources on the history of widespread disease in Native American communities, students will better understand the impact of COVID-19 on Native American communities today.
2. After reading contemporary literature on the impact of COVID-19 on Native American communities today students will be able to compare and contrast the impact of widespread disease on Native American communities in the past and present.

Process Objective

Students will read primary and secondary sources on the history of widespread disease in Native American communities, students will better understand the impact of COVID-19 on Native communities today.

Value Objective

Students will use their knowledge of Native American history and the impact of pandemics in their communities to help them understand Native American struggles in contemporary times and to combat racial discrimination.

Day Six through Nine Assessments

Interactive Lecture:

The teacher will provide an interactive lecture about the impact of widespread disease throughout Native American history. The teacher will tie this group of lectures to the content from the previous days about Native American history and culture.

Reflection and Discussion

Students will end the day by writing a reflection on the lectures, readings and course material. The class will end with a discussion.

Research Paper

Students will begin to develop a research paper focusing on some aspect of the daily life of Native Americans prior to the twentieth century. Students should pay particular attention to tribal differences. Examples of projects students can focus on include Native American education, the impact of widespread disease, Native diet, hobbies and

entertainment, cultural differences between tribes, family structure, occupations, dwelling places, and responsibilities between women, men and children. Students should discuss the implications their history has on contemporary Native life.

Oral presentation

When students have completed their papers, the teacher can set aside days where they can give oral presentations that highlight their findings. Students are free to use PowerPoint, Prezi or other digital tools to present their work.

Extensions for Learning

Video Resource and Reflection

Students can view excerpts from the films *Cheyenne* and *Broken Arrow* to discuss Native American stereotypes that persist today.

Game Project

Students will create a game designed to teach some aspect of Native American history. Examples of games students can create include a board game, a card game or a digital game.

Create a Documentary

Students can create their own documentaries highlighting key concepts from readings, primary source materials and lectures.

Dramatic Role Play

Students can act out important scenes from the Native American history in ways that are culturally sensitive. They can also create skits, or even three act plays depicting the history they have learned for a final assessment.