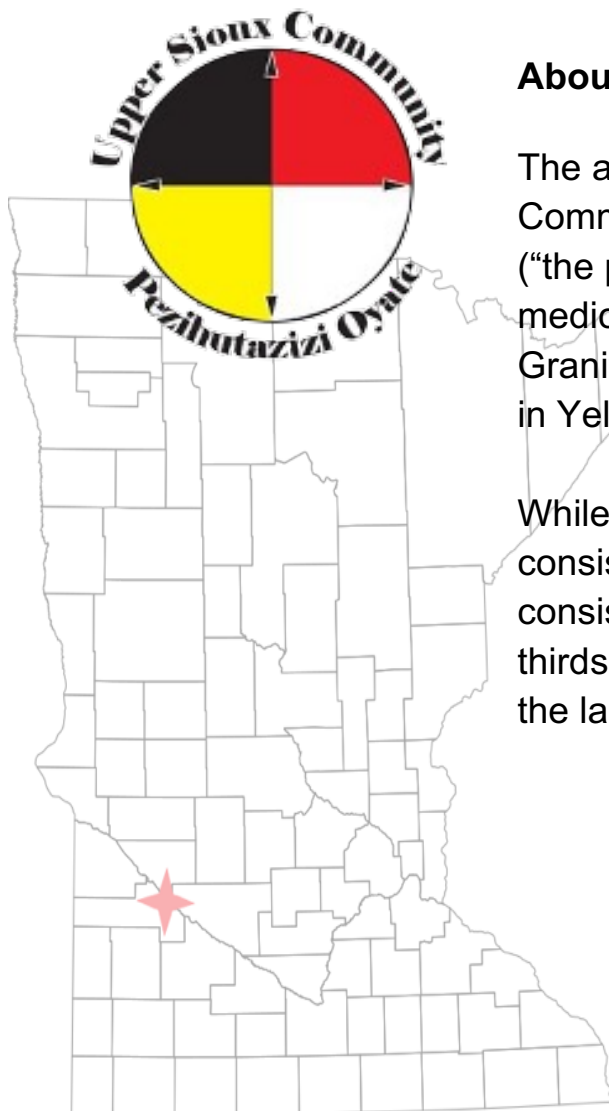


Voices from Pezihutazizi Oyate: Boarding School Histories



Documentary Discussion Guide

This discussion guide is meant to be used after watching “Voices from Pezihutazizi Oyate: Boarding School Histories” to encourage further learning and discussion about the impacts of Indian boarding schools.



About the Upper Sioux Community:

The ancestral lands of the Upper Sioux Community is referred to as Pezihutazizi Kapi (“the place where they dig for yellow medicine”). It is located five miles south of Granite Falls, MN along the Minnesota River in Yellow Medicine County.

While the Tribe’s ancestral homelands consists of millions of acres, the reservation consists of 2,165 acres today, which two-thirds has been purchased by the Tribe over the last 30 years.

Scan to view video



Discussion Questions

The following open-ended questions can be utilized to generate meaningful discussion, small group exploration, and even multi-dimensional research opportunities. Responses to these questions can be as simple or complex as needed, based on age group, background information, and family history.

1. How did Indian boarding schools impact the Upper Sioux Community?
2. Who is responsible for creating Indian boarding schools?
3. How were children traditionally raised in the Upper Sioux Community?
4. What are some examples that the Upper Sioux Community members spoke of in regards to justice and healing in their community?
5. In the video, Genocidal Studies Scholar, Chris Mato Nunpa says “Indian residential schools were genocide.” Utilizing the United Nations Genocide Convention definition of *genocide* below, how does your knowledge of the U.S. Indian boarding school experience relate to each of these criteria:
 - (a) Killing members of the group;
 - (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
 - (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
 - (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
 - (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.
6. In the video, Autumn Wilson says assimilative boarding school history “is deliberately not taught, is deliberately kept silent...”, even though the “...history of Indigenous boarding schooling is a global wide

phenomenon.” Discuss your knowledge of boarding school history and how you became aware of it? What do you think is needed to change the silence?

7. In the video, Adam Savariego describes the loss of language taking effect intergenerationally within the span of four generations. Adam describes his generation “left wondering why [he doesn’t know his language].” Discuss why Native language acquisition was targeted, disrupted, and prevented in the boarding school system.

8. Why is “land back” such a critical element to justice and healing for the Upper Sioux Community members in the video?



“It’s the systematic oppression and genocide of what it meant to be Indigenous”

*-Adam Savariego, Upper Sioux Community member,
on Indian boarding schools*