

# AMERICANS

A Dialogue Toolkit for Educators



Smithsonian  
*National Museum of the American Indian*



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## Introduction

American Indians represent less than 1 percent of the U.S. population, yet names and images of Indians are everywhere: military weapons, town names, advertising, and that holiday in November. Why?

The *Americans* exhibition features nearly 350 objects and images, from a Tomahawk missile to baking powder cans, all showing that Indian names and images are everywhere in American life. Through this display and an examination of the staying power of three stories—the life of Pocahontas, the Trail of Tears, and the Battle of Little Bighorn—the exhibition shows that Americans have always been fascinated, conflicted, and profoundly shaped by their relationship to American Indians.

This toolkit provides basic grounding in the practice of dialogue, and includes three 60-minute models (focused on grades 4–12) that educators can use in the *Americans* exhibition to facilitate dialogue with students. Through the intentional use of dialogue, educators can tap into the *Americans* material to facilitate new conversations with and among students about the power of images and words, the challenges of memory, and the relationship between personal and national values.

This toolkit is rooted in methodology used by members of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, a worldwide network of places dedicated to remembering past struggles for justice and addressing their contemporary legacies. The coalition was founded on the idea that, as trusted educational and community spaces containing human connections to the past, museums and historical sites are ideal venues for fostering dialogue and civic engagement.

# What is dialogue?

Dialogue is a mode of communication that invites people with varied experiences and differing perspectives to engage in an open-ended conversation, with the express goal of personal and collective learning. Facilitated dialogue refers to an intentional process “led” by a facilitator. Educators can use this toolkit to facilitate dialogue among students, and to combine a shared experience, questions, techniques, and ground rules to ensure that all participants can communicate with integrity.

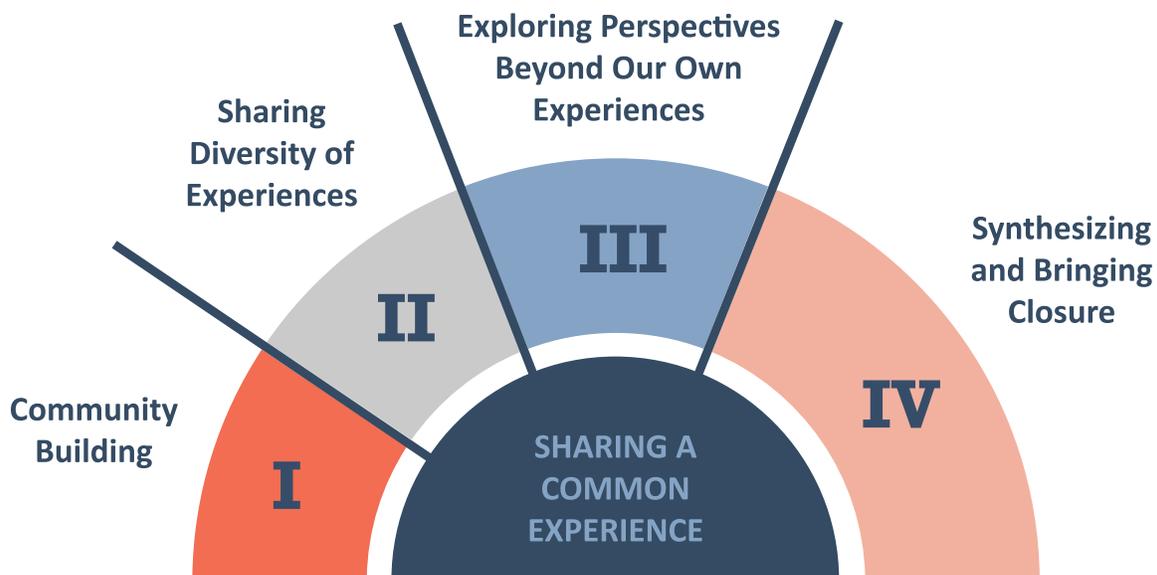
Dialogue acknowledges that there are different ways of knowing about any given subject, and it accepts that knowledge can be drawn from both personal experience and formal study. Participants in dialogue accept that it is possible for two markedly different perspectives to coexist and that it is not necessary to be entirely correct or entirely wrong. Because dialogue attempts to be a non-hierarchical mode of communication, a facilitator’s primary role is to uphold equality among all participants.

# Asking better questions in a better order

In developing dialogue models, Sites of Conscience members commonly employ a tool called the arc of dialogue.

Developed by Tammy Bormann and David Campt, the arc of dialogue structure pairs an experience shared by all participants, in this case the *Americans* exhibition, with a sequence of questions designed to build trust and communication.

A shared experience (for example, a visit to the exhibition) can occur before the arc of dialogue begins, OR the dialogue-arc questions can be asked throughout the shared experience (for example, in each section of the exhibition). Arcs are structured around four phases: community building, sharing personal experience, exploring beyond personal experience, and synthesizing/bringing closure.



## PHASE ONE: COMMUNITY BUILDING

Phase One of the arc encourages connection and relationship-building within the group. The work done here creates a space in which all participants can engage with one another. Phase One comprises four parts: describing the role of the facilitator, explaining the intent of the dialogue, establishing guidelines, and asking a question or questions that allow everyone to speak. Phase One questions are non-threatening and allow participants to share information about themselves. They are most commonly framed in the “you” mode, and they apply the idea of ORACLE: the Only Right Answer Comes from Lived Experience. In an *Americans* dialogue, facilitators might ask:

- ▷ What was the first story about American Indians you learned?
- ▷ What values define you? Your family?
- ▷ Where do you see American Indian images and names in your daily life?

## PHASE TWO: SHARING OUR OWN EXPERIENCES

Phase Two invites participants to think about their own experiences related to the topic and share them with the group. The facilitator helps participants recognize how their experiences are alike or different, and why. Phase Two questions welcome each person’s experience equally and place minimal judgment on responses, gathering more information than questions in Phase One. Possible Phase Two questions for *Americans* might include:

- ▷ How has your story been told by others? How has it changed over time?
- ▷ What values do you associate with America?
- ▷ When have you been misunderstood? When have you misunderstood others?

## PHASE THREE: EXPLORING BEYOND OUR OWN EXPERIENCES

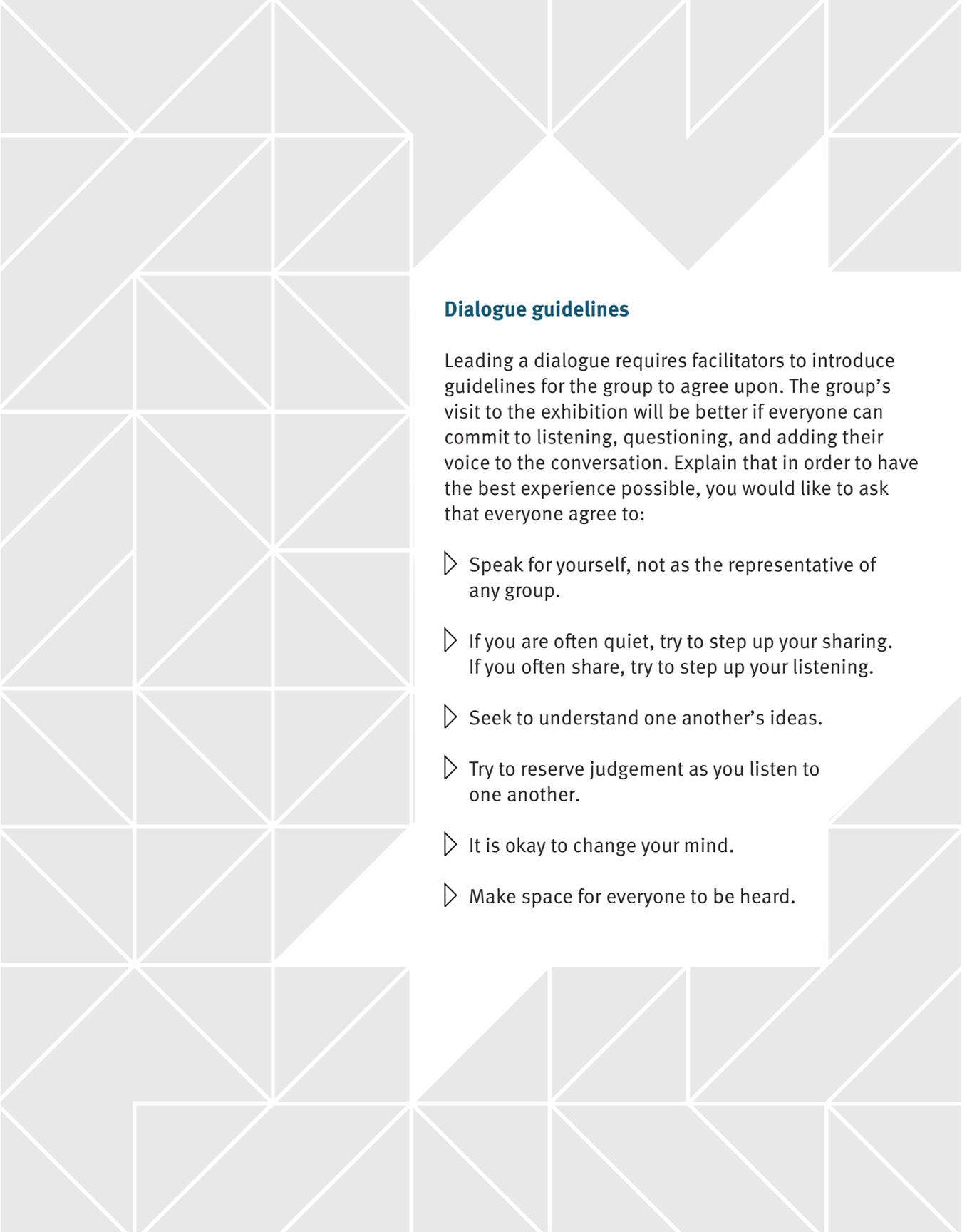
Phase Three questions explore the topic further to allow participants to learn with and from one another. Until this point, participants speak primarily from their own experience, on which they are the undeniable experts. Phase Three questions provoke participants to dig deeper into their assumptions and to probe underlying social conditions that inform the diverse perspectives in the group. Possible Phase Three questions for *Americans* might include:

- ▷ Where does the American story live up to your hopes? Where are we falling short?
- ▷ How has your race, ethnicity, and/or gender influenced your personal values?
- ▷ What is the media’s/advertisers’/Hollywood’s responsibility in shaping how society views American Indians?

## PHASE FOUR: SYNTHESIZING THE EXPERIENCE

After dialogues have revealed differences as well as similarities among participants, it is important to end by reinforcing a sense of community. Phase Four questions help participants examine what they have learned about themselves and one another and express the impact that the dialogue has had on them. Possibilities for *Americans* include:

- ▷ How might this exhibition change the way you tell the story of America?
- ▷ What did you hear in this conversation that challenged or confirmed your assumptions?
- ▷ Are there things you heard today that you want to understand better?



## Dialogue guidelines

Leading a dialogue requires facilitators to introduce guidelines for the group to agree upon. The group's visit to the exhibition will be better if everyone can commit to listening, questioning, and adding their voice to the conversation. Explain that in order to have the best experience possible, you would like to ask that everyone agree to:

- ▷ Speak for yourself, not as the representative of any group.
- ▷ If you are often quiet, try to step up your sharing. If you often share, try to step up your listening.
- ▷ Seek to understand one another's ideas.
- ▷ Try to reserve judgement as you listen to one another.
- ▷ It is okay to change your mind.
- ▷ Make space for everyone to be heard.

# Troubleshooting dialogue facilitation

## How do you de-escalate debate among participants?

Remind participants that airing different ideas is why they have come together, but that to continue to be productive the dialogue must remain focused on the issue.

Insert yourself with a probing question aimed at one participant in the debate; allow the other participants the opportunity to answer as well.

- ▷ What bothers you most about this?
- ▷ What is at the heart of the disagreement?
- ▷ What experiences or beliefs might lead a person to support that point of view?
- ▷ What do you think is really important to people who hold that opinion?
- ▷ What do you find most convincing about that point of view?
- ▷ What is it about that position that you just cannot accept?
- ▷ What makes this topic hard?
- ▷ What have we missed that we need to talk about?
- ▷ How else can we look at this?

Invite others into the conversation: “Would someone else like to offer an opinion?”

## When is it appropriate for a facilitator to share their own stories?

When a facilitator shares their personal experiences with participants, it can help deepen the trust of the group. It shows that the facilitator, too, has a personal stake in the group’s learning. Additionally, if a facilitator chooses to answer a question before the participants do, the facilitator can model behavior in keeping with the group’s guidelines. Facilitators should only share personal experiences and opinions, however, in Phases One and Two of the program, those meant to elicit personal responses. Facilitators who respond personally after Phase Two, as the group addresses more challenging questions, risk being perceived as biased or judgmental. At that point, the group may need the facilitator to shepherd productive dialogue.

## What do you do when participants share false information?

Ask yourself if it is vital for *you* to correct the information. Recognize your own biases and your need to “fix” beliefs that don’t align with your own. Often, other participants will correct the misinformation. Try asking “Does anyone else have a different experience with this?” or “Has anyone else heard other information about this?”

Be aware that participants in dialogue, as all of us do, often get hung up in a dispute about facts when no one knows the answer. Remind the group that experts often disagree, and redirect the dialogue with a question.

Remember, though, that not everything is up for dialogue. A facilitator should feel confident in unequivocally correcting false information if the information shared:

- ▷ creates an unsafe environment for participants
- ▷ reinforces a damaging historical untruth

# Dialogue Model 1: Powerful Images, Powerful Words

60 minutes (Grades 4–12)



American Indians are 1 percent of the population but names and images of Indians are everywhere: the Tomahawk missile, the Land O'Lakes Butter maiden, the Jeep Cherokee, the Big Chief writing tablet. Why? These words and images have a story to tell and can reveal a buried history.

## PHASE ONE: COMMUNITY BUILDING

Phase One helps build the learning community by allowing participants to share information about themselves.

### WHERE TO GO Indians Everywhere gallery



Greetings from Cherokee, Iowa, postcard, ca. 1949  
The Newberry Library, Chicago IL



Indian words and images—both historical and contemporary—continue to shape how we think about American Indians.

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What are the symbols of America?
- ▶ When you think of American Indians, what images or words come to mind?
- ▶ How does where you are from influence the way you think about American Indians?
- ▶ Who or what first taught you about American Indians, and what did you learn?
- ▶ After asking a Phase One question, and to prepare the group for Phase Two, ask participants to look around the space to find two images. Ask that, if possible, they take pictures of the images with their phones:
  1. One should be an image they are comfortable with/that engenders positive feelings, thoughts, or memories.
  2. The other should be an image that they are uncomfortable with/that engenders negative feelings, thoughts, or memories.
- ▶ Invite the group to reassemble in smaller groups of three or four to share their choices.

## PHASE II: SHARING OUR OWN EXPERIENCES

Phase Two helps participants recognize how their experiences are alike and different, and why.

### WHERE TO GO Battle of Little Bighorn gallery



Images have the power to shape how we see an entire group of people, for better or worse.

*The Battle of Little Bighorn marks the moment that Plains Indians, once a feared enemy, became a symbol of the country itself. In the decades following Little Bighorn, the very Indians who crushed the 7th Cavalry became celebrities, and beloved Americans. As printing technology advanced, images of Indians representing valor, freedom, and skilled combat appeared everywhere in American life. Advertising took off, and the images were used to sell all manner of products. The Plains Indian headdress became famous around the world. With each advance in movie technology came new styles and attitudes toward depicting the West and American Indians. But through it all Plains Indian imagery remained stuck in the past.*

*Very few Lakota men ever earned the honor of wearing the wapaha (wah-PAH-hah), or eagle-feather headdress. For a man to wear one, his elders and peers had to see in him fortitude, perseverance, generosity, and bravery. When wearing the wapaha, a man always thought of his people.*

### DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ When has a word or image made you feel small? When has one empowered you?
- ▶ When have you been misunderstood? When have you misunderstood others?
- ▶ What makes a stereotype negative? Are stereotypes always negative?



Sicangu (Brulé) Lakota *wapaha*, or eagle-feather headdress

South Dakota  
ca. 1880  
Eagle feathers, eagle downy feather, wool cloth, cotton cloth, silk ribbon, porcupine quill, glass beads, hide thong, metal chain, cotton/sinew thread.

NMAI 18/774  
NMAI Photo Services,  
Smithsonian Institution

## PHASE III: EXPLORING BEYOND OURSELVES

Phase Three helps participants engage in inquiry about and exploration of the dialogue topic in an effort to learn with and from one another.

### WHERE TO GO Pocahontas gallery



The power of words and images is often harnessed to build influence and authority.

*No Indian in U.S. history has been as beloved, revered, and officially honored as Pocahontas. She has been a constant presence in American life since before the country existed. Four centuries later, her power is undiminished. Early colonists and every generation of Americans thereafter have associated Pocahontas with Jamestown and, by extension, with the founding of the United States. Counties, towns, and parks are named in her honor. Military vessels have sailed under her name. And Pocahontas is among the few women honored in the U.S. Capitol rotunda.*

*Pocahontas lived only 22 years. She left behind no recorded words. She sat for only one portrait. Yet there are countless paintings, illustrations, poems, plays, books, movies, and songs about this famous indigenous woman. Each is a projection of another's ideas about Pocahontas—a mythic and mysterious figure who captivated people in her own time and in every generation that followed.*



Pocahontas, n.d.

Oil painting by an unknown artist, after 1616 portrait by Simon van de Passe  
National Portrait Gallery,

Smithsonian Institution; gift of the A. W. Mellon Educational and Charitable Trust

*The English regarded Pocahontas as royalty. This portrait, created from life when she was in London, was published in a book of portraits of English monarchs and notables.*

### DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ Do images like those you see in this exhibition keep American Indians present in our society? Or do they keep American Indians absent from our society?
- ▶ What is the media's/advertisers'/Hollywood's responsibility in shaping how society views American Indians?
- ▶ What troubles you most about society's perceptions of American Indians? What do you find most reassuring?
- ▶ How do other people's perceptions shape your personal opinions?

## PHASE IV: SYNTHESIZING THE EXPERIENCE

Phase Four helps the group to reflect on the dialogue, and on what they learned.

### WHERE TO GO *Americans Explained* gallery



**Americans are deeply connected to American Indians.**

*Americans are deeply connected to Indians. These connections are with us from our earliest childhood and follow us throughout our lives. Why do they matter? One reason we are so entangled with Indians is that Indians seem to represent all that is most authentically American. They have been a constant in the country since before it began. They never go away. And yet over the centuries our feelings about Indians have been all over the place.*

*The images of Indians everywhere are reminders. Americans aren't quite ready to forget. We want to remember. We are still trying to make sense of a strange, complicated, and powerful history. The images that Americans see every day are [also] linked to a new way of understanding a few familiar events. Together these stories offer an optimistic and provocative way to understand American history and the American present. Like the Indians that appear everywhere, they give us the power to see into the country's deepest foundations.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What will you question, challenge, or investigate after today?
- ▶ What is the greatest misperception about American Indians?
- ▶ Images of American Indians are pervasive in American society. What does that say? Why does it matter?
- ▶ Are there things you heard today that you want to understand better?

# Dialogue Model 2: Telling the American Story

60 minutes (Grades 4–12)



American Indians have profoundly shaped American history, yet the stories Americans tell about American Indians are often false and incomplete.

## PHASE I: COMMUNITY BUILDING

Phase One helps build the learning community by allowing participants to share information about themselves.

### WHERE TO GO Indians Everywhere gallery



Thanksgiving postcard, ca. 1912

NMAI EP1152

NMAI Photo Services,  
Smithsonian Institution



Stories are made up of parts: setting, characters, conflict, and conclusion.

*Thanksgiving is about trying to come to terms with this very difficult truth about the United States: that the country is a national project that came about at great expense to Native people.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ Share a story about what living in your America is like.
- ▶ What's your favorite book/story?
- ▶ How do you celebrate Thanksgiving? Why do you celebrate Thanksgiving?
- ▶ What was the first story about American Indians you heard?
- ▶ Who or what first taught you about American Indians, and what did you learn?

## PHASE II: SHARING OUR OWN EXPERIENCES

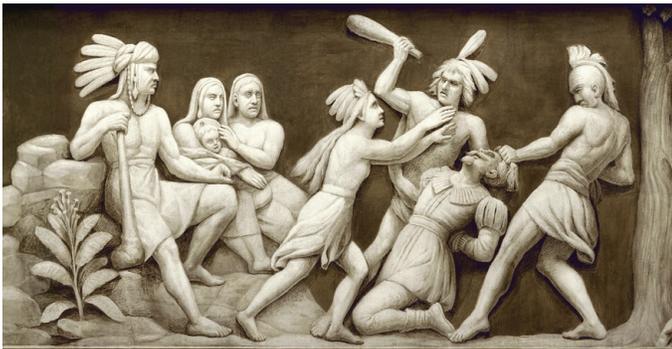
Phase Two helps participants recognize how their experiences are alike and different, and why.

### WHERE TO GO Pocahontas gallery



The narrator of the story defines the story.

“Captain Smith and Pocahontas, 1607,” from *Frieze of American History*, 1877/78



Constantino Brumidi

Courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol

*In this official history of the United States, America begins with Pocahontas, her saving Captain John Smith, and by extension her rescue of Jamestown. The painting reveals many truths about Pocahontas and the interactions between Powhatan and the English colonists in the early 1600s. But historians doubt that the scene it shows—Pocahontas saving the life of Captain John Smith—happened at all. Nonetheless Smith’s dramatic account and its romantic retellings have had tremendous staying power.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What makes a compelling character? What makes Pocahontas a compelling figure?
- ▶ Which narrative voices do you seek out to better understand our country and one another?
- ▶ How has your story been told by others? How has it changed over time?
- ▶ Who can tell American Indian stories? Who should tell them?
- ▶ Share a story you think was too wild to be true.

## PHASE III: EXPLORING BEYOND OURSELVES

Phase Three helps participants engage in inquiry and exploration about the dialogue topic in an effort to learn with and from one another.

### WHERE TO GO Battle of Little Bighorn gallery



Stories can change, depending on who is telling them and when they are told.

*The stuff of sensational news in 1876, the loss at Little Bighorn became dramatic material in the decades that followed. Buffalo Bill’s Wild West stage show and its many copycats blurred the lines between entertainment and history. The performances, which often featured reenactments of the battle, were advertised as “the great struggle of civilization and savagery, finally enabling our continental expansion.” The shows were only the beginning. Colorful posters plastered towns and cities across the United States and Europe. Postcards, photographs, programs, dime novels, and even tour maps enhanced the drama. Together the material and performances told a powerful story of a West that had been “won.” The story shaped Americans’ sense of history. It also appeared to justify America’s expansion by holding up Plains Indians as worthy foes.*



*Battle of Little Bighorn, 1881*

Red Horse (Miniconjou Lakota) National Anthropological  
South Dakota Archives,  
Paper, graphite, colored pencil, Smithsonian Institution NAA  
ink MS 2367-a

*Drawings and paintings depicting warriors' exploits are one of the quintessential Plains Indian art forms. They are also remarkable documents of Plains Indian history. Red Horse was one of about 29 artists who chronicled the Battle of Little Bighorn. Most of the works were created within about two decades of the 1876 battle. They show warriors protecting their homelands and ways of life, and they emphasize the combat prowess of the Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho. Drawn or painted on paper, muslin, or hide, the vivid scenes capture the intensity of the battle and courage of the warriors. The artists pay close attention to the warriors' weapons, military social regalia, and emblems of spiritual protection. Now silent, these documents are eyewitness accounts that would have been accompanied by oral narratives.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What stories about American Indians does society tell today?
- ▶ How does media/social media change the way a story is told?
- ▶ What are the characteristics of a villain? A hero? How do we decide? Can someone be both?

- ▶ Do the stories society tells about the Battle of Little Bighorn celebrate American Indians?
- ▶ Where does the American story live up to your hopes? Where is it falling short?
- ▶ What do we gain from telling and retelling stories that may not be true?

## PHASE IV: SYNTHESIZING THE EXPERIENCE

Phase Four helps the group to reflect on the dialogue, and on what they learned.

## WHERE TO GO *Americans Explained* gallery



Stories are meant to be shared, and how they are shared determines what we remember.

*Together these stories—Thanksgiving, Pocahontas, and Little Bighorn—offer an optimistic and provocative way to understand American history and the American present. Like the Indians that appear everywhere, they give us the power to see into the country's deepest foundations.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What do you want the American story to be?
- ▶ How might this exhibition change the way you tell the story of America?
- ▶ What story do you want to change?
- ▶ What do you need to know more about? How will you learn more?
- ▶ How does viewing this exhibition affect how you think about other historical events?

# Dialogue Model 3: Personal Values and Public Leadership

60 minutes (Grades 4–12)



Values can look different across cultures and contexts. Leaders' personal values may, or may not, uphold the values of the society over which they have power and influence.

## PHASE I: COMMUNITY BUILDING

Phase One helps build the learning community by allowing participants to share information about themselves.

### WHERE TO GO Pocahontas gallery



Values look different across cultures and contexts. Virginians have valued their ancestral connection to Pocahontas because they have viewed her as a savior of the colony and by extension the United States.

*Colonial Virginians considered Pocahontas a savior of their colony. In her teens, she brought food to James Fort. Later, her marriage to John Rolfe not only forged an alliance between the English and the Powhatan confederacy but also led to a break in the warfare between the competing powers. She was in the middle of key events that made colonists' lives not only possible but also profitable. Her husband cultivated the strain of tobacco that made the colony rich. Virginia became the wealthiest and most powerful state in the early United States. For centuries, elite Virginians have proudly touted their family ties to her through her son Thomas.*

*In 1924 Virginia debated the Racial Integrity Act. The law required all Virginians to be identified as either white or colored. It defined as white a person who had “no trace whatsoever of any blood other than Caucasian.” It also legislated Indians out of existence, since it eliminated the category. When the act passed, it included a provision. Those with 1/16th Indian blood would be classified as white. Now known as the Pocahontas Exception, the clause catered to families who descended from Pocahontas and John Rolfe. This permitted aristocratic Virginians to have it both ways: they could claim Indian blood from a cherished ancestor and also remain legally white.*



*Baptism of Pocahontas, 1839*

John Gadsby Chapman

Courtesy of the Architect of  
the Capitol

*Early colonists and every generation of Americans thereafter have associated Pocahontas with Jamestown and by extension with the founding of the United States. Pocahontas is among the few women honored in the U.S. Capitol rotunda.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What values define you? Your family? Your friend groups? Are they the same?
- ▶ What values make you American?
- ▶ Turn to another participant and share with them the name of a leader you respect. Why do you respect that person?

## PHASE II: SHARING OUR OWN EXPERIENCES

Phase Two helps participants recognize how their experiences are alike and different, and why.

### WHERE TO GO Trail of Tears gallery



Leaders often make choices influenced by their personal values.

*In the early 1800s a vigorous debate consumed the country. Should Indians be removed from the Southeast? Opponents of removal argued for the inherent sovereign rights of Native nations. Those in favor asserted that Indians hindered economic progress, and that removal was humanitarian. The debate again and again questioned removal's cost, to American Indians and to the country's soul. Even the act's hardline advocates knew it should at least pretend to honor American values. The United States knew that removing American Indians from their sovereign territories could damage its reputation as a new democracy. The contradiction between democratic values and Indian removal is why the act was so ferociously debated, why it cost so much and took so long, why it was forgotten for half a century, and why it is burned into national memory.*



*John Ross, A Cherokee Chief, 1843*

John T. Bowen

Library of Congress Prints and  
Photographs Division

*In 1827 John Ross (1790–1866) became the principal chief of the Cherokee Nation. During its fight for survival, he and other Native leaders used every democratic means available to resist removal. Convinced that a democracy would respect Cherokee rights, Ross argued for accommodation and friendship with the United States.*



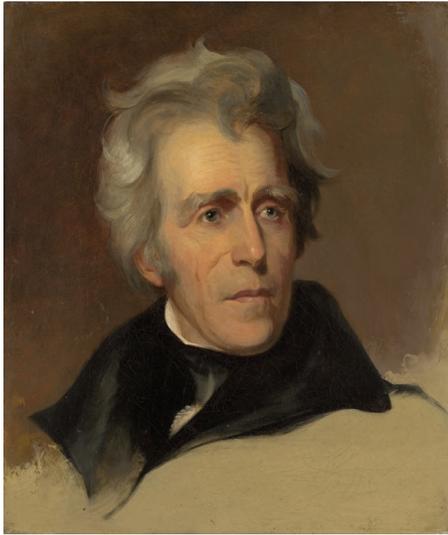
*Hetty Elizabeth Beatty, n.d.*

Sartain

Darlington Digital Library  
Images, University of Pittsburgh

*“To you then, as the constitutional protectors of the Indians within our territory and as the peculiar guardians of our national character, and our country’s welfare, we solemnly and earnestly appeal to save this remnant of a much-injured people from annihilation, to shield our country from the curses denounced on the cruel and ungrateful, and to shelter the American character from lasting dishonor.”*

*—Women of Steubenville, Ohio, in a petition to Congress, February 15, 1830*



Andrew Jackson, 1845

Thomas Sully

National Gallery of Art,  
Washington

*Andrew Jackson (1767–1845) was a populist whose first major initiative as president was to set in motion the removal of American Indians from the Deep South, a territory constituting nearly one-half of the settled United States. The policy resulted in the seizure of tens of millions of acres of Native land.*

### DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What values do you associate with America/with democracies?
- ▶ Who has influence in your community? Why?
- ▶ Work in pairs. Tell each other a story of when you have best lived up to your values. When you have acted not in accordance with them?
- ▶ Have you ever broken your word? What were the consequences?

## PHASE III: EXPLORING BEYOND OURSELVES

Phase Three helps participants engage in inquiry and exploration about the dialogue topic in an effort to learn with and from one another.

### WHERE TO GO Battle of Little Bighorn gallery



Leaders' personal values may, or may not, reflect the values of the society over which they have power and influence.

*Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho leaders earned respect by building consensus and fostering unity. On the northern plains, warfare was focused on intelligence, leadership, and achieving war honors. Successful warriors, essential to the survival of their societies, were held in high esteem.*



Lakota shirt, ca. 1875

North or South Dakota  
Mountain sheep hide, wool  
cloth, rawhide, ermine, hair,  
glass beads, porcupine quills,  
paint, dye, sinew

NMAI 9963  
NMAI Photo Services,  
Smithsonian Institution

*Lakota, Cheyenne, and Arapaho ceremonial shirts identified a man's place in his society. They represented his leadership position and right to speak on his people's behalf. These honors were not granted to a man until he had proven himself by performing war deeds. But so important were generosity, wisdom, and fortitude, in addition to bravery, that if a wearer did not embody all these qualities, his shirt could be taken from him.*

## DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ Are American leaders upholding our national values? In what ways are they successful? In what ways could they do better?
- ▶ Which should guide our leaders—personal values or public sentiment?
- ▶ How has your race, ethnicity, and/or gender influenced your personal values?
- ▶ Lakota leaders were selected; U.S. presidents are elected. Is one better than the other?
- ▶ How does what we remember and what we forget define us?

## PHASE IV: SYNTHESIZING THE EXPERIENCE

Phase Four helps the group to reflect on the dialogue, and on what they learned.

### WHERE TO GO Indians Everywhere gallery



The objects, images and stories shown here are not what they seem. They are insistent reminders of larger truths, an emphatic refusal to forget. These stories reveal a buried history—and a country forever fascinated, conflicted, and shaped by its relationship with American Indians.

### DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

- ▶ What did you hear in this conversation that challenged/confirmed your assumptions?
- ▶ Which of your personal values do you think would make our nation better?
- ▶ What does the enduring nature of these three American stories say about what our nation values?

# Acknowledgments

This facilitated dialogue toolkit was created by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in collaboration with the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

The National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI) is committed to advancing knowledge and understanding of the Native cultures of the Western Hemisphere—past, present, and future—through partnership with Native people and others. The museum works to support the continuance of culture, traditional values, and transitions in contemporary Native life.

For other student and teacher resources produced by the National Museum of the American Indian, visit the museum’s Native Knowledge 360° education portal: [AmericanIndian.si.edu/nk360](http://AmericanIndian.si.edu/nk360)

The International Coalition of Sites of Conscience is a worldwide network of places of memory such as museums, memorials, historic sites, and memory initiatives dedicated to remembering past struggles for justice and addressing their contemporary legacies. Sites of Conscience foster public dialogue on social issues to build lasting cultures of human rights. The Coalition provides member sites with direct funding for civic engagement programs, organizes learning exchanges ranging from one-on-one collaborations to international conferences, and conducts strategic advocacy for sites and the Sites of Conscience movement. Currently the Coalition includes more than 225 member sites in fifty-seven countries with total annual visitors in the tens of millions ([www.sitesofconscience.org](http://www.sitesofconscience.org)).

This toolkit has been made possible through the generous support of the Smithsonian Women’s Committee.



International Coalition of  
**SITES of CONSCIENCE**



**Smithsonian**