

Activity

Students create a Reader's Theater performance based on accounts of Sitting Bull's assassination.

Grades

9-12

Content Areas

Social Studies

English Language Arts

Skills

- Creative Writing
- Collaborative Performance
- Appropriate citation of sources

Understandings

1. Sitting Bull's assassination was the culmination of a complicated series of actions.
2. Lakota kinship was appealed to in stressful situations.

Procedure

1. In this activity, students use the firsthand accounts from the *Takuwe* Assassination panel to create their own Reader's Theater. A basic description will be included here, but for more instructions, please go to Facing History's reader's theater activity at <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/readers-theater>.
2. Select excerpts or sections of the Assassination quotations. According to Facing History, when selecting quotations, it is important to keep in mind that:
 - a. Shorter excerpts allow students to "look more deeply at specific language" than do longer excerpts
 - b. Excerpts should contain one main action or decision-making point
 - c. Excerpts should express the larger theme of the text, they shouldn't just be a plot point
3. Before assigning students excerpts, read the panel text aloud or silently as a class. Give students a chance to ask clarifying questions about the assassination or the language used.
4. Break students into groups. Groups of four to six students are ideal, but this can be adjusted based on class size. Assign each group one of the excerpts you've selected. Depending on how you decide to divide the text, it is also possible for separate groups to work on the same section of quotations.
5. After they've read their assigned excerpts, encourage (or require) students to find other resources that list additional people who might have been at Sitting Bull's home, or give more description of what happened. This additional research is optional, but will give students more material for the next step. A potential starting point for additional quotations or information may be <http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/eight/sbarrest.htm>. Any additional resources students decide to include should be recorded, cited appropriately, and turned in at the end of the activity.

6. Students now work in their groups to create their Reader's Theater. See the Facing History link listed above for specific instructions. It's important to keep in mind that students are not trying to perform an exact reenactment, but rather to use the text as a foundation for a creative performance or reading that expresses both the primary "plot" point of their excerpt and the larger themes of the panel.
7. Groups perform their work. Facing History provides a framework for feedback and notetaking that may be useful in guiding students on how to be a good audience member. The site also has information about suggested debriefs and discussions for the class.
8. Have students evaluate how their group worked together. The Peer Assessment Collaborative Rubric developed by Intel Corporation is a general model for assessing group work. It assesses six collaboration skills: participation, leadership, listening, feedback, cooperation and time management. For more information and a handout for students, go to <https://www.intel.com/content/dam/www/program/education/us/en/documents/project-design/density/density-peer-rubric.pdf>.