

Activity

Students journal or write reflectively in response to “lifted lines” from the Assassination panel of *Takuwe*.

Grades

6-12

Content Areas

English Language Arts

Skills

- Reflective writing
- Formulating questions

Understandings

1. In times of stress, people often reach out to relatives.
2. The advantages and protections of a kinship network may not function in the face of greater social change.

Procedure

1. This activity focuses on the role of kinship in Lakota culture as expressed in the Assassination panel. This activity is best done in conjunction with a broader reading of the panel and exhibit. Make the full panel text available to students.
2. The activity assumes students are keeping a classroom journal. If students do not have a classroom journal, the activity can be done as a standalone writing activity. This activity uses a “Lifted Line Journaling” strategy. More information about using journals in the classroom, along with more information about this strategy and others, can be found at <https://www.facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/journals-facing-history-classroom>.

3. Background: On December 15th, 1890, during and after the arrest of Sitting Bull at his home, he and twelve other persons were killed. Two who died, Bull Head and Crow Foot, are quoted in the *Takuwe* Assassination panel of appealing to their adversaries by using kinship terms:

Our lieutenant told the Indians that were coming towards us: “Brothers and sisters, cousins and uncles and nephews, don’t do anything bad.” – Red Tomahawk

My uncles, do not kill me. I do not wish to die. – Crow Foot

The lieutenant that Red Tomahawk mentions is Bull Head, who was the leader of the police force that was sent to arrest Sitting Bull. Crow Foot was a young teenager who mocked Sitting Bull for not forcefully resisting arrest. The subsequent melee outside the home of Sitting Bull resulted in the deaths of Sitting Bull and six of his followers (Black Bird, Catch The Bear, Little Assiniboine, Spotted Horn Bull, Brave Thunder and Chase Wounded) and the deaths of five Indian policemen (Bull Head, Afraid Of Soldier, John Armstrong and David Hawk Man). When the surviving policemen retreated into the home of Sitting Bull, they discovered Crow Foot hiding inside and killed him. Crow Foot was a son of Sitting Bull, his last remaining offspring.

4. The purpose of this journal assignment is to have students think critically about the roles and responsibilities of relatives. Ask students to “lift a line” from the panel text that references relatives and to use it to respond thoughtfully to prompts such as “Why is it that in times of turmoil we often turn to relatives for help? What questions does this quote raise for you?”