

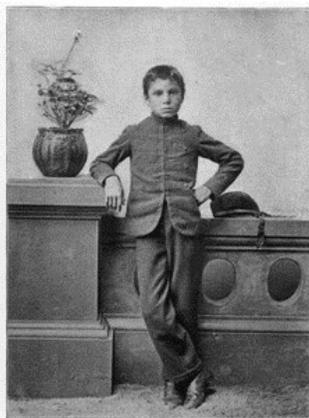
First Hand Accounts of an Indian Boarding School, 1879
By Luther Standing Bear

At the age of eleven, ancestral life for me and my people was most suddenly ended without regard for our wishes, comforts, or rights. One day white people from the east came and said they wanted to take Indian boys and girls on a train to a school. I could think of no reason why white people wanted Indian boys and girls except to kill them, and not having any idea of what school was, I thought we were going to die. All at once I was pushed into a strange world in which I was forced to remake myself into an imitation of the invaders and begin the "civilizing process." They threw away our moccasins and skins then replaced them with uncomfortable pants and buttoned shirts. Next they shaved our heads because civilized men did not have long hair. Then they changed our names to ones that were common in the English language, like John Henry or Maggie. We were also forbidden to speak our native language. The language of people is part of their history. This is not only robbing the Indian but also robbing America of a rich culture. But change in clothing, housing, food and confinement combined with loneliness was too much for many and in three years nearly half of the children from the plains were dead.

1. Explain what Standing Bear meant when he wrote "ancestral life for me and my people was most suddenly ended without regard for our wishes, comforts, or rights." _____

2. Define assimilation. (This is not in the reading, you must look this up) _____
3. Describe four examples of assimilation that are found in this reading. _____

Answer the following questions using the photo on the left.



4. Identify and describe three differences between these two photographs. _____

5. Using three examples, explain how boarding schools affected Native Americans. _____

Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874.
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