Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People Lesson Plan
By: Jacob Street

Grade Level: 9-10 (can be adjusted for other grades)

Time: Approximately 50 minutes or 1-2 day lesson plan

Standards/Objectives

**RL.9-10.4** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning, mood, and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place or an emotion; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

**W.9-10.6** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

**Diversity 10 DI.6-8.10** I can explain how the way groups of people are treated today, and the way they have been treated in the past, shapes their group identity and culture.


Hook (or Pre-Activity)

The teacher will begin with 3 questions relating to Native Americans and their history:

1. What do you know about Indigenous peoples who live in the United States?
2. How has the United States treated Indigenous peoples throughout history?
3. Where do Indigenous peoples live currently?

The teacher will host an open discussion, using these questions to guide if needed, but allowing for other questions and ideas to be introduced. Next, the teacher will show the following video:

[https://youtu.be/OOWUDM1GBhk](https://youtu.be/OOWUDM1GBhk)

After watching the video, the teacher will ask the students to think for 30 seconds to a minute about the video. Then, the teacher will go through the same 3 questions with the goal of hearing about what the students have learned from the video or how their perspectives have changed.

Students will read/listen to “Once the World Was Perfect” by Joy Harjo. They will be asked to get into groups and highlight the 5 most important words or phrases in the poem to them. When the class
reconvenes, the students will share their ideas and explain why the highlighted words are important to them.

https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/141846/once-the-world-was-perfect

**Activity**

Students will go to the Big Read Traveling Stanzas Website. Students will select the “Emerge” tab at the bottom of the webpage. Students will use the arrows to scroll through the tabs until they find, “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.”

The teacher (or students independently) will read the document. The teacher will then model the Emerge Poetry activity, but selecting a portion of the text to clip. The teacher will then select words that are interesting, important, or standout. These words will become highlighted as the new, original poem from the text.

Students will work independently, to clip a section of the document and will select words to make their original poems.

**Post-Activity**

The class will come back together and work to decide some “Emerge”-ing themes, which will be written on a board or large paper. Then, students can go up to where the themes are written and put a mark next to their favorite ideas/ones they agree with. Finally, a word cloud will be generated where the most popular words or phrases will appear the largest and be surrounded by the rest; this can provide a visual representation of what was learned or taken away from the lesson.