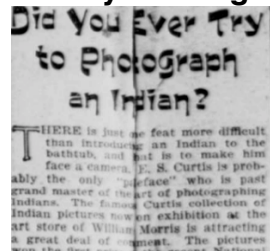


Teaching with Primary Sources Assessment

Grade Level: High School (9-10)

Standard(s) or Objectives: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

Library of Congress or Morris Special Collections Resources:



The San Francisco Call, October 14, 1900

<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1900-10-14/ed-1/seq-4/>

Topic Background:

Edward S. Curtis was an entrepreneur, photographer, and enthusiast who dedicated much of his career to an idealized goal of recording traditional American Indian customs. His opinion of Indians as a primitive other race reflects the majority American perspective following the “conquest” of the west, promoting a “myth of a vanishing race, with the notion that Indians are historical features of an American landscape, not functioning members in a modern society.”

Excerpted from: <http://curtis.library.northwestern.edu/aboutwork.html>

Source(s) Used:

The source used for this assessment is taken from excerpts of a news article appearing in the *San Francisco Call* on October 14, 1900. The article features successful photographer E. S. Curtis, especially concerning his work photographing Native Americans. Curtis relates a few experiences and the methods used to photograph members of the Native population.

Answer Key:

Question 1—C

Question 2—A

Did You Ever Try to Photograph an Indian? (excerpts)
The San Francisco Call, October 14, 1900

...Says Mr. Curtis, "...It was only through the friendship of White Calf, chief of the Blackfoot tribe, that I was allowed to be present during the ceremonies. As I had, by various means, endeared myself to his people there was little protest against my presence.

"I found these Indians comparatively easy to photograph, thanks to the intervention of White Calf, and in addition to the usual 'open sesame'—money. However, despite even this combination, I had some trouble and once almost lost my scalp. It is the custom of the men to collect the logs for the lodges...I wished to get a picture of them riding back from one of these wood sorties and stationed myself accordingly. Three horsemen dashed into sight, at the head an Indian called 'Small Leggins,' who had a particular disgust for the camera. I got the picture, but the quick eyes of 'Small Leggins' saw what I was about and with an angry cry he headed his horse for me, intending to ride over me. By a miracle of good luck Chief White Calf, riding from the other direction, saved my life. Afterward I won the friendship of Small Leggins, but he never lost his distrust for the camera."

"White Calf, though he urged the others to pose, was very coy when it came to taking the medicine himself. Finally he consented. I was anxious to get him not only because he was chief but he is one of the few baldheaded Indians I have ever heard of. He appeared as promised, but alas! instead of the picturesque everyday garb he was got up regardless in a faded misfit blue uniform, obtained heaven knows how. His bald head was covered with an elaborate blond wig, on which perched an army hat several sizes too small..."

Questions:

1. What phrase from the passage best describes how Mr. Curtis "endeared himself" to the Blackfoot people? (CCSS. RI.9-10.1)
 - a. "...through the friendship of White Calf, chief of the Blackfoot tribe..."
 - b. "By a miracle of good luck..."
 - c. "...the usual 'open sesame'—money."
 - d. "...I won the friendship of Small Leggins..."
2. The passage above describes two specific photographs Curtis took of Native American subjects. What do these stories reveal about Curtis' purpose in the interview? (CCSS. RI.9-10.6)
 - a. He wishes to show how he works to document traditional Native culture and costume.
 - b. He wishes to show how white people can make friends with Native peoples.
 - c. He wishes to make Native peoples appear ridiculous to his white audience.
 - d. He wishes to prove his own bravery and adventurous nature.